

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

**** 2021 Championship Season****
(Aug. 1, 2020 – July 31, 2021)

Section 9: IFA continues to follow the NCAA Pitching Rule with regards to pitcher's starting position.



Independent Fastpitch Association

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IFA

IFA Mission Statement

The IFA organization will strive to provide the youth of today with opportunities through fastpitch softball, helping to expand their lives in the future. This will be accomplished by guiding the youth with the promotion of fair play, teamwork, healthy competition, sportsmanship, leadership and the respect of others. While accomplishing the above we will strive to strengthen the lives of those we serve. Fastpitch softball should be used as a positive reinforcement to encourage hard-work, dedication and promote the pursuit of a quality education. This organization will strive to always do what is right for the teams, regardless of the pressures from those individuals that may want to gain political or monetary advantages. Our motto will be "always do what is right and be honest and fair to all". What we have learned is growing this organization or any organization is about the relationships with our teams, league programs, and tournament directors with an eye towards quality, affordable invitational and championship tournament play for all. It is our goal that this philosophy reaches all teams under our watch.

The IFA would like to give special thanks to the NCAA, in particular, Dee Abrahamson, for allowing our organization to use the NCAA Fastpitch Rules to help guide us in developing a rule book for our youth program.

IFA National Website(s)

www.ifafastpitch.com or www.fastpitchsoftball.net

TO REGISTER A TEAM WITH IFA Fastpitch, A Division of VTD Sports

Click the "Create an Account" link

ALL IFA NATIONAL EVENTS ARE UPDATED ON OUR WEBSITE EACH SEASON. INFORMATION PACKETS ARE DISPLAYED ONLINE FOR TEAMS TO REVIEW.

In rulings that are not found in the IFA rulebook, all decisions will revert to the current NCAA rulebook.

Conduct Policy

UMPIRES should uphold the integrity of the game; enforce its rules by observing the following guidelines of professionalism and ethics:

- Maintain and develop an understanding of current IFA Fastpitch Rules.
- Be unbiased and fair in decision making, rendering them without regard to the quality of play on the field or the score.
- Honor all contracts and assignments.
- Alcohol and tobacco are prohibited.
- When on-site or in uniform, do not fraternize with coaches, players or fans.
- Work with your partner(s) to arrive at decisions that are ultimately correct and fair.
- Listen and respond in a professional manner to coach's concern(s).
- Information that might be used by a team's future opponent should not be shared.
- Seek assistance for the appropriate individuals in controlling unruly spectators and fans.
- Display a dignified attitude and be polite towards the game and its participants.

COACHES are expected to comply with the following ethics and principals:

- Maintain and develop an understanding of current IFA Fastpitch Rules.
- Make sure players are legally equipped and properly attired for practices and competition.
- Confine discussion with the officials to the interpretation of the playing rules.
- Comply with the intent and spirit of the rules. The intentional teaching of players to violate the rules is unjustifiable.
- Teach players to respect the integrity and dignity of the game, opponents, fans, officials and the institutions they represent.
- Ban team personnel from using profanity or making personal or malicious remarks towards opponents, fans or officials.
- Abstain from personal action that might provoke players or spectators to unsportsmanlike actions.
- Be in command of players at all times, in order to prevent any unsportsmanlike acts toward officials, fans or opponents.
- Seek assistance from the appropriate individuals in controlling unruly spectators or fans.
- Be polite

Conduct Policy

IFA, as an organization, reserves the right to:

- a) Interpret the rules using the best judgment of its officials for fair and balanced play;
- b) Restrict player movement(s) among teams without approval from IFA staff;
- c) Remove players from games / tournaments for violating the player conduct policies in Section 12 of this IFA rulebook;
- d) Remove a coach from a game / tournament / for sufficient reasons of misconduct. Furthermore, if IFA determines the violations to be so severe as to consider this individual(s) a detriment to the girl's and organization, IFA reserves the right to permanently ban this person(s) by imposing a ban, which can be determined by IFA.
- e) Remove a spectator from a game / tournament / for sufficient reasons of misconduct. Furthermore, if IFA determines the violations to be so severe as to consider this individual(s) a detriment to the girl's and organization, IFA reserves the right to permanently ban this person(s) by imposing a ban, which can be determined by IFA.
- f) Determine player age qualifications, eligibility, special equipment uses and team tournament placement with regards to college players.
- g) Determine rule sets or exceptions for tournaments at the beginning of play that will be in effect for that tournament.

Age Qualifications and Tournament Eligibility

- a) **Age Eligibility:** Players age on December 31st of current championship season, which is always retroactive August 1st – July 31st each year. Players may play up in divisions.
 - i) In all tournaments, beginning August 1, all players participating must be eligible for the age division the team will participate in during that championship season. (Aug 1st – July 31st)
- b) 18U teams may elect to play "Open" or "Diamond" Divisions, however, any player with prior college experience (a maximum of four (4) college players are allowed per roster) **MUST** play in the "Diamond" division. The college eligibility rule is not eligible for an exception.

Special Equipment:

Metal cleats will be allowed in the 14/16/18 divisions ONLY. All other age divisions are prohibited from wearing metal cleats.

SECTION 1 – Definitions

Altered Bat (I)

A legal bat that has been structurally changed to enhance bat performance.

Appeal (F)

The umpire does not make a ruling until requested by a coach or player about a play.

Backstop (A)

A barrier behind home plate to stop a ball from going too far outside the playing area.

Ball

The ball that is struck, thrown, pitched, etc. A ball also refers to a pitch that does not enter the strike zone and is not struck at by a batter.

Base

One of four points which have to be touched by a runner in order to score a run.

Base Coach

The two representatives of the team at bat who are stationed in the first or third base coaches' boxes to direct the offense. No more than one representative may be in a box.

Base Path

The traditional path traveled by a runner who is attempting to advance to the next base. It is defined by a direct line between the bases and 3 feet on either side of that line; unless a fielder has the ball in her possession and she is within 3 feet of the runner and prepared to apply a tag. A base runner that attempts to avoid a tag by running more than 3 feet to either side of a fielder with the ball in her possession shall be declared out.

Base Runner

A base runner is an offensive player that is advancing, touching or returning to a base.

Batted Ball

Any pitch that comes in contact with the bat. Contact may result in a fair or foul ball and need not be intentional.

Batter

The offensive player whose turn it is to receive a pitch in either batter's box.

Batter's Box

Area where the batter is restricted when batting.

Batter-Runner

An offensive player who started in the batter's box but has left it in an attempt to reach base safely.

SECTION 1 – Definitions

Batting Order

The official list of starting offensive players presented in the order in which they are to bat and recorded on a lineup card.

Batting Out of Order

Failing to bat in proper order as listed on the official lineup card.

Blocked Ball

A live thrown or batted ball that contacts: (1) dead-ball terrain; or (2) contacts game personnel in unauthorized areas, non-game personnel, an object that is neither part of the official playing area or official game equipment, loose equipment.

Bunt

A legally batted ball not swung at but deliberately/purposely tapped with the bat.

Bunt Attempt

Any non-swinging movement of the bat planned to tap the ball into play.

Holding the bat in the strike zone is considered a bunt effort. In order to take a pitch, the bat must be withdrawn – pulled away from the ball and backwards.

Called Game

By order of the umpire, the game is ended.

Catch

The act of a fielder who, with their hand(s) and/or mitt/glove, securely gains possession of a thrown, batted or pitched ball. In establishing the legality of the catch, the fielder must hold the ball long enough to prove that they have ball control and that their release of the ball is (or could have been) intentional or voluntary. If the fielder has made the catch but drops the ball either in making a throw or transferring it to the throwing hand, the ball shall be ruled a caught. For a legal catch, a fielder must catch and have secure possession of the ball before falling, touching or stepping into a dead-ball territory. A fielder who falls through or over a fence after making a catch shall be credited with a catch. A fielder who catches a ball while stepping or contacting on a collapsible fence while the fence is vertical is credited with a catch. A catch shall not be credited if:

- a. The ball strikes anyone or anything other than a defensive player while it is flight.
- b. An entire foot is touching dead-ball terrain at the time of the catch.
- c. A fielder catches a thrown, batted or pitched ball with anything other than her glove/mitt or hand(s) in its proper place.
- d. Immediately following a catch, the fielder collides with an umpire, another player or fence or falls to the ground and fails to maintain possession of the ball.

SECTION 1 – Definitions

e. The fielder uses part of the uniform or equipment that is displaced from its proper position.

NOTE: In this case, the ball is ruled a ground ball.

f. A collapsible fence is on or falling to the ground when the fielder contacts the ball. *NOTE: In the case, batter is awarded a home run.*

g. The fielder traps the ball. A batted line drive or fly ball is considered trapped if it hits a fence or ground on a short hop before being caught. A thrown ball is considered trapped if it is caught but the ball is on the ground and the mitt/glove is over, rather than under it. A pitched ball is considered trapped if it is a strike but touches the ground on a short hop before being caught by the catcher. A ball prevented from hitting the ground by a player's equipment (providing it is in its proper place) of body shall not be ruled caught until the ball is securely held in the player's mitt/glove or hand(s).

Catcher

The defensive player to whom the pitcher throws when pitching to a batter.

The catcher must be in the catcher's box in order to receive a pitch and, as such, is the only player who can and must be positioned in foul territory at the time of the pitch.

Catcher's Box

The area to which the catcher is restricted from the time the pitcher steps on the pitcher's plate until she releases the pitch.

Checked Swing

The restraining action taken by a batter to stop an attempted bunt/hit/slap.

Chin Strap

A part of the helmet that must be worn (mandatory, if attached) when used by an defensive or offense. (Not required as part of the catcher's mask)

Coaches Box

Prior to release of the pitch, the area to which the two base coaches (one per box) are restricted.

Conferences

A defensive conference is a meeting that takes place anytime a defensive team representative delays the game or requests suspension of play for any reason and delivers a message (by any means) to any defensive player.

A charged offensive conference is a meeting that takes place anytime an offensive team representative delays the game or requests a suspension of play for any reason and delivers a message (by any means) to any offensive coach, player and/or representative.

Courtesy Runner

Player allowed to run for catcher or pitcher. Runner is not considered a substitute.

SECTION 1 – Definitions

Crow Hop

An illegal action in which the pitcher's rear foot leaves the pitcher's plate and re-contacts the ground before the release of the pitch.

Dead Ball

A ball that is not in play and does not become live again until the pitcher holds it on the pitcher's plate and the umpire signals/calls "Play ball/Play."

Dead-Ball Territory

That area beyond any real playing field boundary such as a rope, chalk line, fence, backstop, dugouts, bleachers or any imaginary boundary line as determined in the pre-game conference.

Defense

A team or player in the field attempting to prevent the offensive team from scoring runs.

Delayed Dead Ball

A situation in which a violation of a rule occurs and is recognized by the umpire with a delayed dead ball signal but in which the ball remains live until the end of the play.

Double First Base

A safety base used at first base. The defense uses the white portion of the base and the batter-runner proceeds to the orange portion of the base.

Dislodged Base

A base dislodged and displaced from its proper position

Dugout (Bench)

The area reserved for team and personnel engaged in the game.

Ejection

The exercise of an umpire's power/authority to remove a player and/or other team personnel from further participation in a game.

Extra Inning

Play continuation beyond the regulation seven innings in an attempt to break a score that is tied.

Face Mask

A part of the helmet that protects the face and is mandatory for on-deck batters and offensive batters.

Fair Ball

A legally batted ball that touches or bounds over a base, settles on or is touched on or over fair territory. A fair line drive, fly or grounder shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not with respect to the position of the fielder (on foul ground or fair) at the time the ball is contacted.

SECTION 1 – Definitions

Fair Territory

That part of the playing field within and including the foul lines from home plate to the bottom of the home run fence and perpendicularly upwards. Home plate, the foul lines and poles are considered part of fair territory.

Fake Tag

When a fielder, who neither possesses the ball nor is about to receive the ball, obstructs a runner by pretending to have the ball and simulating a tag, thereby causing the runner to stop or slow down.

Field of Play

The area within which the ball may be legally fielded and played.

Fielder

One of the nine players on the defensive team who takes a position on the field and attempts to stop the offensive team from scoring. It may be the catcher, pitcher, first baseman, second baseman, third baseman, shortstop, right fielder, center fielder or left fielder.

Fly Ball

A batted ball, whether foul or fair, that rises into the air above the top of the batter's head.

Flex

The abbreviation for "flexible player", which refers to the player who starts/begins the game in the defensive lineup but is not in the batting order.

Force Play

A play in which the base runner loses their right to occupy a base because the batter becomes a batter-runner who has not yet been put out.

Forfeited Game

A game declared ended and granted to an offended team by the umpire.

Foul Ball

A legally batted ball that is touched on or settles on or over foul territory. A foul line drive, fly or grounder shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and foul line, including the foul pole, and not with respect to the position of the fielder at the time the ball is contacted.

Foul Territory

That part of the playing field outside the third and first base lines from home plate to the bottom of the home run fence and perpendicularly upwards.

Ground Ball

A batted ball, whether foul or fair, that bounces along the ground.

Halted Game

A game that is temporarily suspended by the umpire with the intent that it will be resumed at some later date or time. The game shall be continued from the point of suspension, if resumed.

SECTION 1 – Definitions

Helmet

Protective headwear most commonly worn by an offensive player. Helmets are required while running the bases, batting or in the on-deck circle. Catchers are required to wear a protective helmet while receiving pitches in a game. Other defensive players may wear a helmet for safety reasons.

Home Team

The team that starts the game on defense (in the field). The home team may be determined in many ways (i.e., mutual agreement, conference, coin flip or tournament assignment, custom)

Illegal Bat

An inappropriate bat that does not meet acceptable specifications (i.e., length, particular weight, material limits, barrel diameter) as set forth in Rule 3.2

Illegal Pitch

Any pitch by the pitcher that is in violation of the pitching rules.

Illegal Player

A player who is not entitled to participate who competes in the game.

Illegal Re-entry

A violation of the substitution rules that occurs when an illegal player (one who is not entitled to play) is put back into the game.

Illegally Batted Ball

A pitch contacted by the batter: 1) with an illegal bat, 2) with an altered bat, 3) when one or both feet are on the ground and entirely outside the lines of the batter's box at the time of ball-bat contact, or 4) when any part of either foot is in contact with the plate at the time of ball-bat contact.

In Flight

Any pitched, batted or thrown ball that has not touched an object, the ground or a person other than a defensive player.

In Jeopardy

The term indicating that a ball is live and an offensive player may be put out.

Infield

That portion of the field in fair territory that may be skinned and defended by the infielders and pitcher.

Infield Fly Rule

When declared by an umpire, a fair fly ball (not an attempted bunt or a line drive) that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when runners are on first and second or all three bases are occupied and before there are two outs in the inning. Any defensive player positioned in the infield at the time of the pitch shall be considered an infielder for the purpose of this rule. The ball is live, the batter is out, which removes the force, but runners may advance at their own risk. The runners may tag up and advance as soon as the batted ball

SECTION 1 – Definitions

is touched by a fielder. When a declared infield fly becomes foul, it is treated as a foul ball, not an infield fly.

Infielders

Fielders who defend the normally skinned portion of the field. They include first, second, third, shortstop, catcher and pitcher.

Inning

- a. Portion of the game within which the teams alternate on defense and offense and in which there are three putouts for each team.
- b. Half Inning. Each team's respective time in the field or at bat. The interval during which one team is on defense and the other team is on offense. A half inning ends when there is a third out or when, in the last inning, the winning run is scored.
- c. Extra Inning. One or more that extends the game in an attempt to break a tie score.

Intentional Base on Balls

"Ball four" is purposely thrown to a batter.

Interference

The act of an offensive player, umpire, coach or spectator that denies the fielder a reasonable opportunity to play the ball. The act may be unintentional or intentional and the ball must have been playable.

Leap (Pitcher)

An illegal act in which the pitcher becomes airborne on her initial movement and push from the pitcher's plate.

Line Drive

A foul or fair batted ball that travels parallel to the ground immediately off the bat, neither dropping to the ground or rising into the air. If caught, it is scored as an out.

Lineup Card

The card that contains positions, uniform numbers and both first and last names of all starting players, listed in order in which they are to bat and the uniform numbers and first and last names of all eligible substitutes. In addition, it shall include the first and last name of the head coach.

Media Coverage

Media, authorized by the Tournament Director, may be allowed on the playing field. Media may not use tripods or other stationary devices. Should media personnel accidentally come in contact with a live ball, the ball remains live.

No Pitch

Declaration by an umpire that halts play and nullifies the pitch.

Offense

Team or player at bat attempting to score runs

SECTION 1 – Definitions

On-Deck Batter

All on-deck batters will occupy the circle behind the batter, regardless of dugout for safety.

Out

A declaration by the umpire indicating an offensive player has been retired. Each team is permitted three outs per inning.

Outfield

That portion of fair territory that is artificial grass or grass surface and typically defended by the outfielders.

Outfielder

Fielders (typically three) who defend the grass portion of the field between the normally skinned infield and home-run fence. They usually include the right, center and left fielder.

Over slide

When sliding, the act of a base runner **which** loses contact with a base or passes it.

Overthrow

A thrown ball that goes beyond its intended target. The ball is live unless it becomes a blocked ball or it enters dead-ball territory.

Pinch Hitter

A player who is inserted into the lineup in the place of the batter. The pinch hitter will stay in the lineup until she is replaced by another substitute or by the player for whom she batted.

Pinch Runner

A player who is inserted into the lineup in the place of a base runner. The pinch runner will stay in the lineup until she is replaced by another substitute or by the player for whom she ran.

Pitch

A live ball delivered with a legal underhand motion to the batter by the pitcher.

Pitcher

The defensive player designated to deliver pitches to batters.

Pitcher's Pivot Foot

The pitcher's foot that maintains contact with the pitcher's plate, absorbs the body's weight and pushes off against the plate during the initial "step" phase of the pitch. This same foot drags along the ground during the final phase of the pitch and is then referred to as the rear or drag foot.

Pitcher's Stride Foot

The pitcher's foot that extends forward toward home plate as she steps to deliver the pitch to the batter. It is also referred to as the lead foot.

SECTION 1 – Definitions

Play

An attempt by a defensive player on a thrown or batted ball to retire a batter-runner or a runner. A pitch is not a play except as it relates to an appeal play.

Play Ball

The directive given by the umpire to resume play or begin the game. It also indicates that the defensive players are in position, the batter is ready to bat and the pitcher may deliver the pitch.

Protest

A formal inquest into the decision of an umpire.

Quick Pitch

A pitch released with the obvious intention of catching the batter unprepared to bat or off balance.

Rostered Players for Championship Play

No player will be allowed to be on more than one roster participating in National play in any age or classification.

- Regional / Area Directors will have the discretion regarding rostered players in qualifying tournaments leading to national play within their region. However, in no case shall the total number of players on a roster exceed a maximum of 20 players.

Run

The act of an offensive player legally advancing to and touching home plate without being put out.

Rundown

The act of the defense attempting to put out a base runner who is caught off base between two or more defensive players and who may either attempt to return to the previous base or advance to the next base.

Safe

A declaration by the umpire indicating that a runner is not out or has successfully taken possession of a base and is no longer in jeopardy.

Slap Hit

A batted ball that has been struck with a short, chopping motion rather than with a full swing. The two most common types of slap hits are:

1. Those in which the batter takes running steps (within the batter's box) toward the pitcher before making contact with the pitch.
2. Those in which the batter takes her stance as if to bunt but then either drives the ball into the ground with a quick, short swing or punches it over the infield.

Starter

The players listed on the "official" lineup card given to the umpire before the start of the game. Each starter is entitled to be replaced and re-enter one time, as long as she assumes her original position in the batting order.

SECTION 1 – Definitions

Strike

Any pitch that either is swung at by the batter and missed or enters the strike zone without first touching the ground. A strike also may be called by the umpire for the batter's failure to enter the batter's box when so directed.

Strike Zone

The area above home plate between the top of the knees and the bottom of the batter's sternum when she assumes her natural batting stance. When the top of the ball is on or within the horizontal plane and either side of the ball is on or within the vertical plane of the strike zone, a strike is called unless the ball touches the ground before reaching home plate.

Substitute

A player not listed on the lineup as a starter, but who may legally replace one of the first 9 or 10 players (if DP is used) listed on the lineup card submitted to the umpire before the start of the game.

Tag

The act of a defensive player in:

- a. Touching a base with any part of the body while holding the ball firmly and securely in the gloved hand or hand; or
- b. Touching a runner with the ball while securely held in the gloved hand or hand.

Time

An expression used by the umpire to temporarily suspend play. The ball is dead, until the umpire indicates the resumption of play.

Turn at Bat

The action of entering the batter's box until being put out, becoming a batter-runner or being substituted for while at bat.

Umpires

The individuals hired to rule on plays in the game. They are a plate umpire and one, two or three base umpires.

Unreported Player

A player who has a legal right to enter or re-enter the game or change defensive positions, but has not been reported to the umpire before her participation.

Visiting Team

The team that starts the game at bat. (Offense)

X-P's (X-tra Players) or X-Player

Teams may elect to bat 10 in an 8U, 10U or 12U line-up. 14U, 16U & 18U may, at the discretion of the tournament director, use the XP. X-Players may play defense at any time in the game, but must remain in the proper batting order.

SECTION 2 – FIELD OF PLAY

The following information regarding the field specifications and the playing facilities applies to all competition. In some cases, specifications applicable to hosting a national event may follow the strictest interpretation of a rule.

NOTE: Additional criteria may be requested as well.

2.1 **Backstop**

A backstop is required. It should be a minimum distance of 25 feet and a maximum distance of 30 feet from home plate. It is recommended that the backstop not extend over the playing field and be vertical. If the structure is brick or cement, it is recommended that it be padded.

2.2 **Base, Pitching, Fence Distances (Required for all Championship Play)**

Division	Bases	Pitching	Min. Fence	Max. Fence
6U-8U	60'	Coach Pitch	150'	225'
10U	60'	35'	150'	225'
12U	60'	40'	175'	225'
14U B	60'	43"	200'	225'
14U A	60'	43'	200'	225'
16U	60'	43'	200'	225'
16U Elite	60'	43'	200'	225'
18U	60'	43'	200'	225'
18U Elite	60'	43'	200'	225'

2.3 **Bases / First (Double), Second and Third**

2.3.1 The double first base (if used) shall be used at first base. The base is 15" X 30", made of suitable rubberized material or canvas with half orange and half white. The orange is over foul territory and the white is over fair territory and is securely anchored to the ground. *NOTE: if the field is equipped with a double base, IT MUST BE USED.*

2.3.2 Second and third bases shall be a suitable rubberized material or canvas bags securely anchored to the ground. Each bag shall be 15 inches square, filled with soft material to a thickness of 3 to 5 inches. A release type base may be used. Bases may have tapered edges.

2.4 **Batter's Boxes (optional, if drawn)**

The batter's boxes shall be 6 inches from home plate and shall measure 3 feet by 7 feet, with one on each side of home plate. The front line of each box shall be 4 feet in front of a line drawn through the center of home plate. The four lines must be drawn, if used.

2.5 **Catcher's Box (optional, if drawn)**

The catcher's box shall be 7 feet in length from the rear outside corners of the batter's boxes and shall be 8 feet, 5 inches wide, including the lines. The lines must be drawn, if used.

SECTION 2 – FIELD OF PLAY

2.6 Coach's Boxes

Each coach's box shall be marked by two lines. The first is a line 15 feet long drawn parallel to and 8 feet from the first and third baselines extended from the back edge of the bases toward home plate. The second line is 3 feet long drawn perpendicular to the end of the 15-foot line closest to home plate.

2.7 Dugouts

During play, no one except players, managers, coaches, trainers and scorekeepers shall occupy the dugout. All dugout participants must be in their bench area or bullpen and remain there until the side has been retired or the ball is dead. This excludes the on-deck batter, batter, base coaches, base runners and the nine defensive players. It is recommended that all dugouts be enclosed at each end and at the rear. Each dugout should be able to accommodate all players and team personnel. It is recommended that each dugout be located on the sideline boundaries at a point equal distance from first base and home plate and third base and home plate, respectively.

2.8 Fences

It is highly recommended that the playing field be completely enclosed by permanent side line and home-run fences that are 4-6 foot in height. Temporary home-run fences should be secured so as not to collapse on and displace the foul pole. Out of bounds line shall be used to define dead-ball areas for unfenced fields that may be utilized.

2.9 Field of Play

Infields may be utilized that have skinned artificial grass or natural grass areas. The outfields should be a natural grass consistency, when possible.

2.10 Foul Poles

The foul pole extends vertically upward from the foul line at the point it intersects the fence and should be plastic, wood or metal. The foul pole should be outside or attached to, but not inside the fence. The pole should be a minimum of 10 feet in height. To enhance the visibility of a ball leaving the field of play near the pole, it is recommended that a screening be attached to the fair side of the pole. The width of this screening should be a minimum of six inches and should extend from the top of the pole downward to the top of the fence.

NOTE: A field that does not have a home-run fence shall not have a foul pole.

2.11 Ground Rules

Special conditions for play may be adopted for local ground rules by the tournament director. The home plate umpire shall enforce the local ground rules that have been established by the tournament director.

SECTION 2 – FIELD OF PLAY

2.12 Home Plate

A five-sided slab of whitened rubber or other suitable material shall comprise home plate. The measurements shall be 8 ½ inches long on the sides and 17 inches wide on the edge facing the pitcher, which is parallel to the pitcher's plate. The sides of the point facing the catcher shall measure 12 inches in length.

Home plate shall be set in fair territory. With the 17-inch edge facing the pitcher, the two 12-inch edges will coincide with the foul lines extending from home plate to third base and to first base.

Home plate shall be secured in the ground and have top edges that are beveled. Home plate should be set level with the ground surface.

2.13 Infield

Allowing for natural surface drainage, the infield shall be level. It is recommended that the entire playing field be graded one percent from the edge of the pitcher's mound to the sideline boundaries of the field.

2.14 Layout

Refer to the drawings shown on the official diagram page for the layout of the playing field.

2.15 Lines

All lines on the playing field shall be marked with non-burning material that is not harmful to the eyes or skin, or chalk. Caustic material or lime of any kind is prohibited. Lines should be marked 2 to 4 inches in width. The outside edge of first and third base lines and their extensions should correspond with the outside edge of third and first base.

2.16 Non-regulation Field

Checking the playing field to be sure all is legal is the responsibility of the umpires. The umpires should make every effort to obtain the correct dimensions. Non-regulation fields, in which a game has been started, shall not be protested for this reason.

NOTE: If a pitching or base distance is found to be incorrect, correct and continue without penalty.

2.17 On-deck Circle

The on-deck circle shall measure 5 feet in diameter and shall be designated for the next batter to warm-up. On-deck circles are located to the side and away from home plate.

2.18 Pitcher's Circle

The pitcher's circle shall be an area with a 16 foot diameter (8 foot radius). This area is drawn from the center of the front edge of the pitcher's plate.

SECTION 2 – FIELD OF PLAY

2.19 Pitcher's Plate

The pitcher's plate shall measure 24 inches long and 6 inches wide rectangle and be a slab or whitened rubber or other suitable material. The plate shall be fixed in the ground and level with the ground surface. The measurement based on age group (Page 14) should be the front edge of the pitcher's plate to the back point of home plate.

2.20 Runner's Lane

The runner's lane should be skinned. This area is the last half of the distance between home plate and first base where the batter-runner must run to avoid interfering with a fielder's attempt to receive a thrown ball. It is bounded by a 30-foot line drawn in foul territory parallel to and 3 feet from the first base line, beginning at a point halfway between home plate and the back edge of first base.

2.21 Scoreboard / Scorebook

A visible display of score is recommended. It is recommended that a system shows balls, strikes, outs and score. It should be easily visible by spectators and both teams. Scoreboards should not be placed directly in the field of vision by the batter.

The official scorebook will be the responsibility of the home team, unless designated differently prior to the beginning of the game. The umpire shall consult with the "official scorebook" with regards to counts and substitutions prior to making his/her final decision.

- a. Electronic score systems are not considered verifiable in a dispute, thus IFA requires teams to use a manual scorebook.
- b. In a dispute involving game results, the umpire/tournament director will ask the home team if they are keeping a correct/accurate manual scorebook. If the answer is no, the tournament director will ask the visiting team if they are keeping the score via a manual scorebook. If the visiting team can be verified as keeping a correct/accurate scorebook, tournament host may designate the visiting team as the official scorekeeper for the remainder of that game.
- c. In the event, neither team is using a manual scorebook, the tournament host may make the judgement to utilize his/her decision based on the home team version, visiting team version or umpire version at their discretion.

2.22 Sideline Territory

It is recommended that the unobstructed area between the backstop and home plate and from the sideline to the baseline be 25-30 foot distance. This should be extended down the line as deep as the home run fence.

SECTION 3 – Equipment and Uniforms

The IFA, Independent Fastpitch Association, is responsible for establishing the official playing rules for the sport. The IFA is not responsible for approving and testing playing equipment.

Manufacturers of equipment have undertaken the responsibility for the improvement and development of playing equipment that meets weight and size specifications. The IFA supports independent testing agencies and/or to take necessary steps to ensure the production of safe products by manufacturers. The IFA does not certify the safety of any softball equipment. Only the equipment that meets the specifications of NCAA may be used in IFA competition.

Development of new equipment, technical or scientific standards for testing equipment or the approval/disapproval of specific playing equipment is not the responsibility of the IFA. However, IFA does reserve the right to establish weight/size criteria and minimum/maximum performance restrictions.

All equipment used in competition should be of a nature commonly available to the general public through retailers. Protective equipment and uniforms must be worn properly and defective equipment must be replaced or repaired immediately.

3.1 Ball

The red-stitched 12 inch natural or synthetic ball, yellow optic cover, with a COR of .47 and 375lb. Max compression, shall be used in all IFA. The 10 and under division shall use a red-stitch. natural or synthetic 11-inch ball, yellow optic cover, with a COR of .47, shall be used in IFA play. The umpire has the discretion to remove a ball, of any type, they deem in poor condition.

3.2 Bats – Game

Bat standards will be defined in IFA as those defined by the NCAA.

EFFECT – If a batter enters the batter’s box with an illegal bat (one that does not meet NCAA specifications), upon discovery, the bat shall be removed from the game (i.e., not returned to the dugout) the batter shall be declared out and base runners shall not advance. If the batter enters the batter’s box with an altered bat (one that enhances performance by being structurally changed); the penalty for an illegal bat shall be imposed, in addition, to the batter being ejected from the game.

3.3 Bats – Warm-up

The warm-up bat must have a minimum barrel diameter of 2 inches and weigh no less than 39 ounces. The bat shall have a safety grip 10-15 inches from the

SECTION 3 – Equipment and Uniforms

knob that is securely affixed and be a one-piece construction. No attachments (ie., donuts, fans, etc.) are allowed on an official bat, except Pow'R Wrap or the SwingSock attachments.

EFFECT – The presence of an illegal attachment or bat in the on-deck circle shall result in the equipment's removal from the game (ie, not returned to the dugout) and the player shall be warned. Should the illegal attachment or bat re-appear in the on-deck circle, the coach shall be ejected.

3.4 Casts / Splints / Braces / Prostheses

Casts, splints, braces and prostheses may be worn by players as long as the equipment is well-padded to protect not only her opponents, but also the affected player. Any such appliance with exposed pins, sharp edges, rivets or any form of external fastener that would present a danger, must be properly padded. The player must, in the umpire's judgment must be able to function during the game without limitations.

3.5 Catcher's Equipment

All catcher's must wear a mask with an attachable or built-in throat protector, NOCSAC, approved body protector, shin guards which offer protection to at least the knee to foot area and helmet with ear flaps. An attachable throat protector shall be unaltered, securely attached and commercially manufactured.

NOTE: Players receiving warm-up pitches off the field of play (dead-ball area, bullpen) must wear a mask with a throat protector. If warming up within the playing field area, a spotter (player/coach) must be utilized.

EFFECT – Violator(s) shall be warned by the umpire. If the violator(s) does not immediately comply, they shall not be allowed to catch or receive warm-up pitches for the remainder of the game; however, they shall not be ejected.

3.6 Gloves/Mitt

All players, except the catcher, must use a leather mitt/glove that meets the following maximum specifications: Palm width: 8 inches; highest finger top to bottom: 14 inches; top opening of web: 5 inches; web top to bottom: 7 ¼ inches; thumb top to bottom edge: 9 ¼ inches.

The catcher may wear a leather glove or leather mitt of any dimension. Gloves and mitts may not be the color of the ball, however, may be a combination of other colors. The pitcher's glove may be brown, tan, black or grey, or any combination of those colors.

EFFECT – The umpire shall direct the fielder to remove the glove/mitt, if noticed before a play. If the illegal glove/mitt reappears, the offending player shall be ejected.

The offensive coach has the choice of taking the resulting play or having the play nullified, if a play is made with the illegal glove/mitt. If nullified, the

SECTION 3 – Equipment and Uniforms

batter returns to bat, the runners return to the bases occupied at the time of the last pitch and play is resumed/continued.

3.7 Helmets

- a. **Offense.** While in the on-deck circle, batting or running the bases, each offensive player is required to wear a double-earflap protective helmet with a face mask. Youth player's who occupy first or third as coaches, must also comply with this requirement. **NOCSAE stamp required.**

EFFECT – If an umpire observes a player wearing an illegal or damaged helmet while at bat, coming to bat or while on base, the umpire shall direct the player to change, without penalty, to a legal helmet. Failure to wear a legal helmet, when directed by the umpire, shall result in the ejection of the player.

Intentionally removing the helmet while actively running the bases or deliberately wearing a helmet improperly shall result in the player being declared out, but shall not remove a force play. The ball remains live.

- b. **Defense.** A helmet or facemask may be worn by a defensive player. If a pitcher wears a helmet, it must be a non-glossy finish.
- c. **Face mask.** An offensive player may wear a helmet with a commercially manufactured protective face mask attached. The face mask must meet NOCSAE standards for the mask and helmet combination and must be permanently attached by the manufacturer or attached by a procedure approved by the manufacturer.

3.8 Jewelry

Players are prohibited from wearing exposed jewelry. Medical alert bracelets/medals or religious jewelry may be visibly worn, however, it must be covered.

EFFECT –If an umpire detects a player wearing jewelry, other than what is allowed, the umpire shall direct the player to remove it. A player ejection will occur if the player fails to remove the jewelry when directed by the umpire.

3.9 Shoes

Players must wear shoes with nylon, canvas, plastic, leather or synthetic material uppers. The soles may have soft or hard rubber cleats or be smooth. Shoes with detachable/removable cleats that screw into the sole of the shoe are allowed. Pitching toes are allowed for all players, as long as the pitching toes are securely fastened.

Metal cleats are allowed ONLY in the 14U, 16U and 18U divisions.

EFFECT – If a player(s) is observed using metal cleats in 12U & under, the player & head coach will be ejected from the game.

Note: *The game/penalty begins at the conclusion of the coaches meeting at home plate.*

SECTION 3 – Equipment and Uniforms

3.10 Uniforms

All eligible players should be attired with uniforms of the same color, style and trim, when possible. *Exception: A player should not be penalized when a part of her uniform must be changed because of factors out of her control.*

- a. Coaches should be neatly attired.
- b. Inclement Weather Gear: Sweat shirts, pants, nylon windbreakers and jackets may be worn, if the weather permits.
- c. Head Wear: If worn, headbands, caps and visors must be worn properly and may be mixed.
- d. Jersey: All uniform jerseys must have a whole number between 0-99, inclusive on the back. Players on the same team may not wear duplicate numbers. If duplicate numbers exist, one of the players must change their jersey or only one player may be in the game at a time. Numbers 0-9 may have a zero in front of the number; however, this additional zero only highlights the original number. (Ex. 0 and 00 = 0 / 5 and 05 = 5). Only one single digit number with or without a zero in front may be used.
- e. Shin/Knee Pads: Shin and Knee pads are permitted and colors may be mixed.
- f. Shorts / Pants: Uniforms may be shorts, pants or combination of both.
- g. Undershirts/undershorts (Sliders) – If worn, they must be worn as intended by the manufacturer (not slit, torn or frayed)

EFFECT – A player with a uniform violation will be removed from the game until the correction is made.

h. The plate umpire shall have the final say in all cases involving distracting color uniforms (optic yellow) worn by pitchers. If it is determined that the ball is obstructed by the color of the uniform then the pitcher shall slip a different color shirt over the uniform in question. This shirt does not need a number or have team name/colors for defensive purposes, however, the same player must remove the cover shirt when batting to clearly identify her by her playing number.

Note: *It should be noted that different umpires will see the ball better and may not see it as an issue; however, this is not part of an argument as this rule is strictly "judgment" in the name of safety.*

3.11 Player Attire

a) Must be functional with no accessories attached. Headwear/ facewear must be worn as intended by the manufacturer for safety purposes and no improper accessories that may be glittery, distracting or the color of the ball may be worn. Distracting headwear/facewear may not be worn. Uniforms, protective equipment and all accessories must be worn properly using the above guidelines.

SECTION 4 – GAME

The defensive team is the team in the field and its objective is to prevent the offensive players from becoming base runners and advancing around the bases.

The offensive team is the team at bat and its objective is to have its batters become base runners and its runners advance legally, touching all bases (including home plate) without being put out. Each time this is done, a run is scored.

When three offensive players are put out, a half-inning has been played and the teams change from defense to offense and offense to defense, respectively.

4.1 Scoring of Runs

- 1) The objective of the game is to score more runs than its opponent. At the conclusion of the game, the winner of the game shall be the team that has scored, in accordance with these rules, the greater number of runs.
- 2) Each time a runner legally touches first, second, third and home plate before the third out of an inning shall be recorded as one run.
- 3) No run shall be scored if the third out of an inning is the result of:
 - a) A batter-runner being called out before reaching first base or any other runner forced out due to the batter becoming a batter-runner.
 - b) A runner being put out by a tag or live-ball appeal play before the lead runner touches home plate.
 - c) A preceding runner being declared out on an appeal play.

Note: An appeal can be made after the third out in order to nullify a run. This is also sometimes referred to as a fourth out.

4.2 Game Winner

The team that scores more runs in a regulation game is the winner of the game.

- 1) 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 an equal number or more runs than the visiting team in the incomplete inning. In this case, the score shall be that of the incomplete inning.
- 2) The score of a regulation tie game shall be the tie score when the game is terminated
- 3) The score of a forfeited game shall be recorded as 7-0 in favor of the team not at fault.

4.3 Starting the Game

The game begins when both teams are ready to play and on the field and the plate umpire signals, "Play Ball".

4.4 Positions of the Offensive Team

The offensive team:

- 1) Must follow the original batting order throughout the game.

SECTION 4 – GAME

- 2) May position base coach in the coach's boxes at third and first base during its time at bat.
- 3) Must keep all personnel except the batter, runner's, base coaches and on-deck batter in the dugout, dead-ball area or bullpen while the ball is in play.
- 4) Must not position any coaches or uniformed team members near or behind home plate, or behind the backstop while the pitcher is pitching to the batter or throwing warm-up pitches.
- 5) May not take warm-up swings on the field of play with the exception of the batter (provided they are outside the batter's box) and the on-deck batter (provided they are in the on-deck circle).

EFFECT – (4.4.4) & (4.4.5) – The umpire shall warn the offender, and if the violator does not immediately move away, the individual shall be ejected from the game.

4.5 Positions of the Defensive Team

During or at the start of a game, all players of the defensive team, except the catcher, must be in fair territory while the ball is put in play.

- 1) Pitcher: The pitcher is considered to be in the pitching position when the catcher is in position to receive the pitch and the pitcher puts both feet on the pitcher's plate. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without being in possession of the ball and may not simulate the pitching position, with or without the ball, when near the pitcher's plate.
- 2) Catcher: When the pitcher steps on the pitcher's plate, until she releases the pitch, the catcher must be in the catcher's box.
- 3) Outfielders/Infielders: All outfielders and infielders must be in fair territory from the time the pitcher steps on the pitcher's plate until she releases the pitch. No part of the fielder's feet may be outside or on the lines until the pitch is released.

EFFECT – (4.5.1) – (4.5.3) – Illegal Pitch (see Rule 9-8)

- 4) While the ball is in play, all personnel except the nine defensive players on the field must remain in the bullpen, dugout or dead-ball area.

4.6 Team in Field First

The designated home team shall take their positions in the field at the start of the game and shall be the last team to bat in an inning.

4.7 Live Ball

When the umpire calls "Play/Play Ball," the ball is in play and live. The ball remains in play and live until, for legal cause or at the umpire's call of "Timeout/Dead Ball/Time," suspending play, the ball becomes dead.

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4.8 Delayed Dead Ball

- 1) A delayed dead ball is a ball that remains in play and live even though a violation has occurred and been recognized by the umpire (through a delayed dead ball signal). At the end of the playing action the umpire shall call "Timeout/Time," the ball becomes dead, and a decision is made regarding the rules infraction.
- 2) Under the following circumstances, a delayed dead ball is called:
 - a) Obstruction by the catcher
 - b) Illegal Pitch
 - c) Field Obstruction
 - d) Interference by the plate umpire
 - e) Detached equipment interference with a thrown or batted ball.

4.9 Dead Ball

- 1) A ball out of play is a dead ball. It may have become ruled dead or blocked.
- 2) While the ball is dead, no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except that runners may advance one or more bases as the result of:
 - a) Acts that occurred while the ball was live (such as, but not limited to, an illegal pitch, obstruction, an overthrow, interference, a home run or other fair ball hit out of the playing field); or
 - b) As a result of a dead-ball appeal.
- 3) Each runner must return to her base between pitches and after a dead ball. A runner who must return to a base while the ball is dead need not touch intervening bases.

4.10 Resumption and Suspension of Play

- 1) "Timeout/Time" shall be signaled and called for the purpose of suspending play. The umpire holds up a hand instructing the pitcher not to pitch until the catcher, batter and umpire are ready. The ball is dead and no other play shall be allowed until the umpire lowers his/her hand, signifying "Play/Play Ball."
 - a) The umpire shall not call "Timeout/Time" until a play has been completed.

Exception: When necessary, to protect an injured player, the umpires may suspend play immediately.

- b) Coaches and players will not be granted "Timeout/Time" when it is an obvious delay of game tactic.
- c) The umpire shall not call "Timeout/Time" after a base on balls until the batter-runner has stopped at first base and each other runner forced to advance has stopped at her next base.

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- 2) A runner, who is touching a base when “Timeout/Time” is called, may not advance nor return to her previous base during the suspension of play.
- 3) If the pitcher pitches while the umpire is suspending play, a “No pitch” shall be declared.
- 4) After a dead ball, play resumes when the pitcher takes her place on the pitcher’s plate with the ball in her possession, the catcher is in the catcher’s box, all runners have reoccupied the base they occupied at the time of the pitch and the umpire signals, “Play Ball”.
 - a) The pitcher must allow sufficient time for the runner to return to her base.

EFFECT: When the runner is not given sufficient time to return to a base, they will not be called out for being off base before the pitcher releases the ball.

The umpire shall declare, “No Pitch.”

- 5) The base runner is obligated to return to her base without undue delay.

EFFECT: After allowing sufficient time for the runner to retouch at the end of playing action, the umpire shall declare the runner out.

4.11 Conferences

- 1) Charged defensive conference

- a) There may be a maximum of three-charged defensive conferences per game. When a defensive conference has been charged, the plate umpire shall notify the head coach or acting head coach. The plate umpire shall record the inning in which it occurred on the team’s line-up card. A charged defensive conference ends when the team coach/representative crosses the foul line.

EFFECT – The fourth, and each additional charged conference in a seven inning game, or for any charged conference in excess of one per inning in an extra inning game, shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The removed pitcher can play another position on defense, but cannot pitch again. If the pitcher returns to the pitching position after being removed and one pitch has been thrown, the pitcher is ejected from the game.

- 2) The following are not charged defensive conferences:

- a) Requesting a suspension of play in order to remove the pitcher from the pitching position (provided the umpire is informed of the charge before the representative steps over the foul line) or to make a defensive substitution.
- b) Shouting instructions to the defense from the dugout without requesting a suspension of play.
- c) Requesting a suspension of play for an obviously incapacitated player.

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- d) Conferring with the defense during a charged offensive conference and being ready to play once the umpire instructs the offensive team “Play Ball / Play.”
 - e) Requesting a suspension of play in order to attend to a potentially injured or sick player. An umpire must supervise the process.
 - f) Requesting a suspension of play for a defensive player to make an equipment change.
- 3) Charged offensive conference.
- a) There may be a maximum of one charged offensive conference per inning. The plate umpire shall notify the acting head coach or head coach when an offensive conference has been charged. The plate umpire shall record the inning in which it occurred and make note of t on the team’s lineup card.

EFFECT: The umpire shall not permit more than one offensive conference per inning. A coach, who defies an umpire by holding another charged conference, shall be ejected.

- b) The following are not charged offensive conferences:
 - i) Requesting a suspension of play in order to make a change in the offensive line-up.
 - ii) Shouting instructions to the offense without requesting a suspension of play.
 - iii) Conferring with the offense during a charged defensive conference and being ready to play once the umpire instructs the defensive team “Play Ball / Play.”

NOTE: If the offensive team is not ready to play, they are in jeopardy of being charged with an offensive conference.

- iv) Requesting a suspension of play in order to attend to a potentially injured or sick player. An umpire must supervise the process.
- v) Requesting a suspension of play for an obviously incapacitated player.
- vi) Requesting a suspension of play for a runner to put on a sweatshirt / jacket.
- vii) Requesting a suspension of play for a runner or batter to make an equipment change.

4.12 Regulation Game

- 1) Seven innings shall be a regulation game, unless:
 - a) The game is extended because of a tie score.
 - b) The game is shortened because:
 - i) The umpire calls the game.

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- ii) The home team needs none or only part of its half of the seventh inning to score more runs than the visiting team.
- c) It is a regulation game when the umpire terminates play by calling, "Game." If, however, a team wishes to lodge a protest or appeal on the final play of the game, it must immediately inform the umpire of that intent.
- d) Free substitutions, speed-up or any other optional rules may not be used.
- e) In a time limit game, the minimum number of inning(s) rule is not in effect, however, the visiting / home team rule is still in effect.

4.13 Tie Breaker Rule

If, after the completion of seven innings (or a time limit has expired) of play, the score is tied, the following tie-breaker may be used to determine a winner.

- 1) Starting with the top of the next inning, and each half-inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player scheduled to bat ninth in that half-inning being placed on second base (e.g., if the No. 5 batter is the lead-off batter, the No. 4 batter in the batting order will be placed on second base). A substitute may be inserted for the runner for scoring.
- 2) Whether or not the tie breaker procedure will be used, and when it shall be invoked, must be determined at the pre-game meeting. Use of the tie breaker rule also can be determined by tournament policy.

4.14 Called Game

- 1) The plate umpire shall declare a regulation called game if, after five or more innings have been completed, she/he terminates play (i.e., lightning, rain, darkness, fire, panic or other causes that place the fans/players in danger). The score shall be that of the last equal inning played, except that in the following circumstances, the score of the game shall be the total number of runs that each team has scored:
 - a) If the home team has scored more runs at the end of its fourth inning than the visiting team has scored in their five offensive half-innings.
 - b) If the home team has scored, in an unequal number of innings, more runs than the visiting team.
 - c) If the home team is at bat when the game is called and has scored in the incomplete inning the same number of runs or more runs than the visiting team.

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- d) If a team is ahead by twelve or more runs after three innings, ten runs after four innings, eight or more runs after five innings.
 - e) Tournament games using time limits must complete a minimum of 50% of the scheduled time to constitute an official completed game.
 - i) For cancelled games that meet the 50% criteria, the last completed inning will be used to determine winners and tie breakers, unless the home team is ahead after a half inning.
- 2) After a conference with the tournament official(s), the game may be called at any time due to crowd behavior, facility problems or other causes that place the patrons or players in danger.

NOTE: If a game is delayed due to inclement weather, a facility problem, etc., a reasonable amount of time (not less than 30 minutes) must elapse before the game is called.

4.15 Halted Game

- 1) A halted game shall be declared by the plate umpire, if play must be temporarily suspended with the intent that it will resume at some later date or time. When play resumes after having been temporarily suspended, it must start at exactly the point of being halted. The batting orders and line-ups of both teams must be exactly the same as they were, subject to the rules of substitution, and any player who played or was announced as a substitute before the game was halted must be in the lineup when play resumes or be ineligible for the remainder of the game.
- 2) Whether or not the halted game rule will be used must be determined at the pre-game meeting. Use of the halted rule also can be determined by tournament policy.

NOTE: If the halted game rule is not utilized, a game stoppage with the score tied is considered a regulation tie game, not a halted game and may not be resumed.

4.16 Forfeited Game

- 1) A forfeited game shall be declared by the umpires in favor of the team not at fault in the following cases:
- a) If, after the game has begun, one side refuses to play.
 - b) If a team is on-site, but refuses to begin a game which is scheduled or assigned within five minutes after the umpire has called "Play Ball / Play", unless such a delay in appearing or in commencing the game is unavoidable.
 - c) If, after play has been suspended by the umpire, one side fails to resume play within two minutes after the umpire has called "Play Ball / Play."
 - d) If, after warning by the umpire, any one of the rules of the game is persistently and willfully violated.

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- e) If a team employs tactics obviously designed to shorten or delay the game.
 - f) If, because of the removal of player(s) from the game by the umpire or for any cause, there are fewer than eight players on the team.
 - g) If the order for the removal of a player, team personnel or coach is not obeyed in a timely manner and a final 60-second forfeit warning has been issued and has elapsed.
 - h) If an ejected player is discovered to be participating again.
- 2) The score of a forfeited game shall be 7-0 in favor of the team not at fault.
NOTE: All game umpires must agree in order to declare a forfeited game.

4.17 Tie-breaker Tournament Formula

IFA Sports Tie – Breaking Formula		Notes:
1 st Tie Breaker	Win-Loss Record	*A team with fewer loses is better than a team with more wins
2nd Tie Breaker	Head-to- Head Competition	** Actual game (s) played against each other
3rd Tie Breaker	Total Runs Allowed in Tournament	*** Bracket Games Only!
4th Tie Breaker	Total Runs Scored in Tournament	**** Bracket Games Only!
5 th Tie Breaker	Coin Flip	***** Last Option Only!

NOTE: If there is a multiple team tie for a placement, each scenario must be broken independently. (Example: A three-way tie - Determine which team finishes first and then start the tie-breaking process from the beginning again for the other two teams.)

4.18 Maximum Time Limit between Half Innings

Each team will have a maximum of one (1) minute mid-inning to be ready to continue play of the game.

Effect: The team not ready to begin will have a ball or strike called against them. Each additional full or portion of a minute will result in additional ball or strike until play resumes.

SECTION 5 – APPEALS AND PROTESTS

5.1 Appeals

- 1) An appeal is a rule violation or play on which the umpire does not make a ruling until requested by a player or coach.
- 2) Submitting an inaccurate line-up card does not constitute an appeal or penalty, the “correct and continue rule” is in effect.
- 3) The following may be appealed:
 - a) Missing a base.
 - b) Batting out of order.
 - c) Attempting to advance to second base after making the turn at first base.
 - d) Leaving a base on a caught fly ball before the ball is touched first.
- 4) Until put out, a runner is assumed safe. A runner is safe, if a proper appeal is not made.
 - a) If a runner misses home plate and the catcher misses or makes no attempt to tag the runner, the umpire shall make a safe signal and declare “No Tag”. If a proper appeal is requested, by tagging the runner or plate before the runner returns to the plate, the runner shall be declared out.
 - b) If a runner passes first base before the throw arrives, she is considered to have touched the base unless an appeal play is made before she returns to first base.
- 5) Appeals may be requested when the ball is dead (out of play) or live (in play).
 - a) **Live-ball appeal:**
 - i) A live-ball appeal is made by touching the base the runner missed or left before a fly ball was first touched or by tagging the runner who committed the violation, provided she is still on the playing field, and indicating to the umpire what is being appealed (if necessary).
 - ii) Runners may advance during the live-ball appeal play.
 - iii) A live-ball appeal can be made after a play on a runner.
 - iv) When the ball goes out of play, a live-ball appeal cannot be made.
 - b) **Dead-ball appeal:**
 - i) Once the ball is dead, a coach or fielder (with or without the ball) may ask the umpire to make a decision on the appealed play.
 - ii) Runners may not advance as the ball remains dead until the next pitch.

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- iii) When the ball goes out of play, the dead-ball appeal cannot be made until the umpire places a new ball into the game.
 - iv) If the pitcher has possession of the ball and is in contact with the pitching plate when making a verbal appeal, no illegal pitch is called.
 - v) When “Play Ball” has been declared by the umpire, and the pitcher, coach or a fielder then requests an appeal, the umpire would again call “Time” and allow the appeal process.
- 6) Appeals may be made after the third out.
- 7) Appeals must be made:
- a) Before the next pitch, legal or illegal
- 8) More than one appeal may be made at a time, however, each appeal must be completed before the next appeal will be considered.
- 9) A runner may not return to touch a missed base or one left too soon on a caught fly ball if:
- a) She has left the field of play
 - b) A following runner has scored
 - c) They are standing on a base beyond the base they left too soon and “Timeout / Time” has been called by the umpire or the ball becomes dead.
- 10) With regard to the scoring of runs:
- a) If there are two outs before the appeal on a runner, the appeal becoming the third out, no runners following the appealed out shall score.
 - b) If the appeal is a forced third out, no runners preceding or following the appealed out shall score.

Notes:

- i) *If a forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason toward the base they had last occupied, the force play is re-instated, and they may again be put out if the defense tags the base to which they were forced.*
 - ii) *There cannot be a force out if the batter does not become a batter-runner or runner.*
- 11) If a runner leaves a base too soon on a caught fly ball and returns in an attempt to retag, this is considered a timing play and not a force out. If the appeal is the third out, all runs scored by the runner in advance of the appealed runner and scored ahead of the legal appeal would count.
- 12) An appeal may be made after the third out in order to nullify a run.
- EXAMPLE:** With one out and runners on first and third, the batter hits a fly ball that is caught. Each runner leaves the base before the caught ball is touched. An appeal is made at first base for the third out. The defensive team then

SECTION 5 – APPEALS AND PROTESTS

makes an appeal at third base. The runner on third then will be declared out also and the run will not count.

5.2 Protests

- 1) Protests shall be allowed in the following cases:
 - a. Failure to apply the correct rule to a situation.
 - b. Failure to impose the correct effect for a given violation.
 - c. Misapplication of a playing rule.
- 2) Protests will not be allowed on judgment calls.
- 3) Protest protocol should involve the following steps:
 - a. The coach shall immediately (before the next pitch) notify the plate umpire of his/her intent to protest.
 - b. If the game ends (legal contest) in a situation that can be protested, the offending team must immediately inform the umpire of its intent to protest.
 - c. The plate umpire shall in turn notify the opposing head coach, official scorekeeper and tournament director of the “said” protest.
 - d. If the protest occurs in a tournament, which has the process for an on-site protest resolution, the protest shall be ruled on before play resumes.
 - i. On-site protest committee shall be determined by the tournament director at his/her discretion.
- 4) Decisions rendered on a protested game must result in one of the following:
 - a. The protest is considered invalid and the game can resume or the game score stands as played.
 - b. The protest is considered valid, the decision will be corrected and the game will resume from the point of correction.
 - c. The protest for participation by an ineligible player is determined to be valid, and the offending team shall remove the ineligible player from the tournament and the head coach for the remainder of that game. The offending team will then, “correct and continue” with play from the point of protest.

SECTION 6 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

6.1 Players on a Team

- 1) A team must have the required number of players present in the dugout or team area to start or continue a game.
- 2) In the 14U / 16U / 18U Divisions, players listed in the starting lineup and not available at game time may be substituted for and re-entered later. The players and numbers by which they are identified are as follows:
 - a) Without a designated player – nine positions: pitcher (1), catcher (2), first baseman (3), second baseman (4), third baseman (5), shortstop (6), left fielder (7), center fielder (8), right fielder (9).

Note: A designated player may not be used, if a team begins the game with nine players.

- 3) In the 8U / 10U / 12U divisions, players listed in the starting lineup and not available at game time may be substituted for and re-entered later. The players and numbers by which they are identified are as follows:
 - a) Without a designated player – nine or ten positions: pitcher (1), catcher (2), first baseman (3), second baseman (4), third baseman (5), shortstop (6), left fielder (7), center fielder (8), right fielder (9), X-Player (10) optional.

Note: A designated player may not be used, if a team begins the game with nine players.

- 4) A defensive player is permitted to change to a different defensive position at any time. The plate umpire and official scorekeeper need not be notified.
- 5) After starting a game with nine players, a team can play shorthanded down to eight players, for any reason. A shorthanded position in the lineup is an automatic out.
- 6) A game may begin with eight players, however, if another player arrives, that player must be inserted into the lineup at the ninth batting position. Whenever a team is playing with only eight players, an out will be taken when the last position in the batting order appears.
- 7) Under no circumstances shall a team be permitted to continue a game, offensively or defensively, with less than eight players.
- 8) Only players, listed coaches and game personnel will be allowed in the dugout/field in any IFA event.
- 9) Players may not play on multiple teams in the same event. This includes different age divisions within the event.

6.2 Defense Only (FLEX) and Designated Player (DP) Batter ONLY

The following regulations govern the use of a defense only (FLEX) and a designated player (DP) batter only.

- 1) 14U, 16U & 18U may use the XP player (10th batter) only at the discretion of the tournament director, including Championship Play.

SECTION 6 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

- a. The DP's uniform number and name must be placed in one of the first nine or ten batting positions (depending on whether an XP are used) on the line-up card for 14U/16U/18U game.
 - b. The FLEX's uniform number and name must be placed in the last position on the line-up card.
 - c. The DP must remain in the same position in the batting order throughout the entire game and can only bat/run for the FLEX (no one else).
 - d. The DP and FLEX may not be in the batting order at the same time.
 - e. When the FLEX goes into bat in the DP position, it counts as a substitute for the DP because she has left the game for the time being.
 - f. If the DP replaces the FLEX on defense, the FLEX position on the line-up card is removed. If the FLEX re-enters, it counts as a charged substitution for the FLEX and the FLEX position on the line-up card is re-established.
 - g. The starting DP, once replaced offensively, may re-enter (return to her original position in the batting order) one time. If she does re-enter, she must bat/run for the FLEX. She may just play offense for the FLEX or, at the same time that she plays offense, she may either play defense for the FLEX or play defense for another player in the batting order.
- 2) Age divisions of 8U / 10U / 12U may only bat a maximum of 10 players at any time during the game.
- a. The DP's uniform number and name must be placed in one of the first eleven batting positions on the line-up card for the 8U/10U/12U games.
 - b. The FLEX's uniform number and name must be placed in the last position on the line-up card, regardless of the number of batters.
 - c. The DP must remain in the same position in the batting order throughout the entire game.
 - d. The DP and FLEX may not be in the batting order at the same time.
 - e. When the FLEX goes into bat in the DP position, it counts as a substitute for the DP because she has left the game for the time being.
 - f. If the DP replaces the FLEX on defense, the FLEX position on the line-up card is removed. If the FLEX re-enters, it counts as a charged substitution for the FLEX and the FLEX position on the line-up card is re-established.
 - g. The starting DP, once replaced offensively, may re-enter (return to her original position in the batting order) one time. If she does re-enter, she must bat/run for the FLEX. She may just play offense for the FLEX or, at the same time that she plays offense, she may either play defense for the FLEX or play defense for another player in the batting order.

6.3 Ejected Player / Coach / Personnel

- 1) Umpires have the authority to remove a player and/or other team personnel from further participation in a game for just cause.

SECTION 6 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

- 2) The directive/order for the removal of a coach, player or team personnel must be obeyed in a timely manner.

EFFECT: If the directive/order for the removal of a coach, player or team personnel is not obeyed in a timely manner, a one-minute forfeit warning shall be issued. If the warning expires, a forfeited game shall be declared.

- 3) An ejected player may remain in the dugout, however, may not communicate with the umpires or opponents. An ejected coach must leave dugout, playing field and facility and must not communicate with umpires or opponents. An umpire may also rule a player to leave the facility.

EFFECT: The ejected player who communicates with umpires or opponents must leave the site of the competition.

- 4) Ejected non-playing personnel must leave the dug-out and playing field and may not communicate further with the umpires or teams. They may occupy space along the right field and left field foul lines beyond third base and first base or behind the home run fence, but they may not go behind the backstop near the bullpens or dugout, or along the infield portion of the third and first base lines.
- 5) An ejected coach or player may not participate in the game again.

EFFECT: (4 & 5) – If the directive/order for the removal of a coach, player or team personnel is not obeyed in a timely manner, a one minute forfeit warning shall be issued. If the warning expires, a forfeited game shall be declared by the umpire in favor of the team not at fault.

6.4 Starting Player

8U/10U/12U teams may elect nine or ten batters for that game. Once a line-up is submitted the line-up may not be reduced without an "**out penalty**" in any spot in the batting order, not filled by an eligible substitute. 14U/16U/18U age divisions may elect to use the XP Rule at the discretion of the tournament director, including championship play.

8U/10U/12U coaches are entitled to decide whether they bat 9 or 10 batters and the opposing coach has that same option, however, it is not required that each team utilize the same exact number of batters.

- 1) Once a lineup card has been reviewed and submitted to the plate umpire, it becomes official and establishes that teams intentions for the remainder of that game.
- 2) Any batter on the line-up card may play any defensive position.
- 3) Each starter is entitled to be replaced and to re-enter the game one time, as long as she assumes her original position in the batting order.

Exception: The FLEX may re-enter either in the designated player's (DP) position in the batting order or in her original (last) position in the line-up.

SECTION 6 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

6.5 Substitute Player

- 1) Player substitutions shall be governed by the following:
 - a) When the ball is dead, any player may be substituted for at any time.
 - b) At the time a substitute enters the game, the coach of the team making the substitution shall immediately notify the plate umpire. Projected re-entries are not allowed.
 - c) Substitutes shall be considered officially in the game when reported to the plate umpire.
 - d) The substitute must take the place of the replaced player on the team's line-up card.
 - e) The plate umpire shall record any substitutions on the line-up card and announce immediately, or cause to be announced any such substitutions.
 - f) The plate umpire shall report the change to the opposing team and to the scorer before the next pitch.
 - g) When two or more substitute players of the defensive team enter the game at the same time, the coach shall immediately designate to the home plate umpire the position of each player in the team's batting order.
 - h) The batter may be removed before having received a pitch, whether or not she has completed her turn at bat and whether or not the side has been retired.
 - i) Each substitute is entitled to be replaced and re-enter the game one time as long as they assume their original position in the batting order.
- 2) Pitcher Substitutions shall be governed by the following:
 - a) The pitcher may be removed from the pitching position before having delivered a pitch, whether or not the first batter facing her has completed her turn at bat and whether or not the side has been retired.
 - b) The umpire must remove the pitcher from the pitching position if the defensive team has already used the allotted three defensive conferences in a seven-inning game, or for any charged conference in excess of one per inning in an extra inning game. The removed pitcher may not pitch again for the remainder of the game, but may otherwise participate in the game. If the pitcher returns to the pitching position after being removed, and one pitch has been thrown, the pitcher is ejected from the game.

EFFECT: A pitcher who is removed by an umpire shall be ejected if they return to the pitching position and delivers one pitch
 - c) Following a pitching change, a relief pitcher may throw no more than five warm-up pitches. Play shall be suspended during that time.

SECTION 6 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

EFFECT: A ball shall be awarded to the batter for each warm-up pitch in excess of five. Exception: This penalty does not apply if the umpire delays the start of play for any reason.

- d) A pitcher is not entitled to warm-up pitches if they return to pitch in the same half inning of play.

EFFECT: A ball shall be awarded to the batter for each warm-up pitch.

Exception: This penalty does not apply if the umpire delays the start of play for any reason.

- 3) Unreported substitutions shall be governed by the following regulations:
- If the coach in violation informs the home plate umpire before the offended team's challenge, there is NO penalty regardless of the
 - Length of time the unreported player was in the game. The unreported player shall be declared "officially" in the game.
 - If an unreported player is reported to the home plate umpire by the opposing team before the pitch is made (legal or illegal); there is NO penalty. The unreported player shall be declared "officially" in the game.
 - If the unreported player is reported by the defense before the offensive coach in violation informs the umpire and:
 - A pitch has been thrown, but the unreported player still is at bat.
EFFECT: The unreported player is called out and declared officially in the game. Any advance by the base runners while the unreported player was at bat is legal.
 - The unreported player has completed their turn at bat, but the next pitch (legal or illegal) has not yet been thrown or the pitcher and all infielders clearly have not vacated their normal fielding positions and have not left fair territory.
EFFECT: The unreported player is called out and declared officially in the game. Any advance by base runners as a result of the unreported player becoming a batter-base-runner is nullified and outs are also nullified.
 - The unreported player has completed their turn at bat, but a pitch (legal or illegal) has been thrown to the next batter, or the pitcher and all infielders clearly have vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory.
EFFECT: If on base, the unreported player is called out and declared officially in the game. Any advance by base runners while the unreported player was at bat or due to her becoming a batter-runner is legal.
- d) If the unreported player is reported by the offense before the defensive coach in violation informs the umpire; and

SECTION 6 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

- i) The unreported player has made a play, but the next pitch (legal or illegal) has not yet been thrown, the pitcher and all infielders clearly have not vacated their normal fielding positions and have not left fair territory, or it is the last play of the game and the umpires have not yet left the field.

EFFECT: The unreported player is declared officially in the game. The offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or having the last batter return and assume the ball and strike count they had before the report of the unreported player with each runner returning to the base legally occupied at the time of the last pitch.

- ii) The unreported player has made a play and the next pitch (legal or illegal) has been thrown or the pitcher and the infielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory.

EFFECT: The unreported player is declared officially in the game and the play will stand. In addition, each runner on base at the time of the report is awarded one base.

- iii) The unreported player has not made a play and the next pitch (legal or illegal) has been thrown.

EFFECT: The unreported player is declared officially in the game and all play will stand.

Notes:

- a) *If an unreported player is also an illegal player, the penalty for an illegal player applies.*
- b) *Violation of the unreported player rule may be reported to the umpire at any time.*
- 4) Injured player substitutions shall be governed by the following regulations:
- Substitutes for an injured player must be allowed adequate time to warm-up. Play shall be suspended during the time.
 - If an injury to a runner or batter-runner prevents them from proceeding to an awarded base, the ball is dead and substitutions may be made. The substitute must legally touch all missed or awarded bases not previously touched.
- 5) Illegal Player(s)
- Players who compete in the game, but are not entitled to play include:
 - ILLEGAL Pitcher.** A player who returns to pitch after being removed from the pitching position by the umpire.
EFFECT: Once discovered, the illegal pitcher shall be ejected and all play stands.

SECTION 6 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

- ii) An ejected player entering or re-entering the game.
- b) The following regulations govern illegal players;
 - i) If the coach in violation informs the plate umpire before the offended team's challenge, all play stands, regardless of the length of time the illegal player was in the game. The illegal player is ejected.
 - ii) If the illegal player is reported to the plate umpire by the opposing team before a pitch is thrown (legal or illegal), the illegal player is ejected.
 - iii) If the illegal player is reported by the defense before the offensive coach in violation informs the umpire and:
 - (1) A pitch has been thrown, but the illegal player is still at bat.

EFFECT: The player is called out and ejected. Any advance by base runners while the player was at bat is legal.

- (2) The illegal player has completed their turn at bat, but a pitch (legal or illegal) has not been thrown to the next batter, or the pitcher and all infielders clearly have not vacated their normal fielding positions and have not left fair territory.

EFFECT: The illegal player is called out and ejected. Any advance by base runners as a result of the illegal player becoming a batter-runner is nullified.

- (3) The illegal player has completed their turn at bat, but a pitch (legal or illegal) has been thrown to the next batter, or the pitcher and all infielders clearly have vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory.

EFFECT: The player is called out and ejected. Any advance by base runners while the illegal player was at bat or due to her becoming a batter-runner is legal.

- iv) If the unreported player is reported by the defense before the offensive coach in violation informs the umpire and:
 - (1) The illegal player has made a play, but the next pitch (illegal or legal) has not been thrown, or the pitcher and all infielders have not vacated their normal fielding positions and have not left fair territory.

EFFECT: The player is ejected. The offensive team has the choice of having the last batter return and assume the ball and strike count they had before the report of the illegal

SECTION 6 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

player with each runner returning to the base legally occupied at the time of the last pitch or taking the result of the play.

- (2) The illegal player has made a play and the next pitch (illegal or legal) has been thrown.

EFFECT: The player is ejected, and all play will stand. In addition, each runner on base at the time of the report is awarded one base.

- (3) The illegal player has not made a play and the next pitch (illegal or legal) has been thrown.

EFFECT: The play will stand, and the player is ejected.

Note: Violation of the illegal player rule may be reported at any time to the umpire.

6.6 Re-Entry

- 1) Any of the players, including FLEX and a designated player (DP) may be substituted and re-entered once, providing players occupy the same batting position when in the line-up order. The starting player and their substitute may not be in the line-up at the same time.

EFFECT: A player who illegally re-entered the game shall be ejected and subject to illegal-player penalties.

Notes:

- a) *If a substitution violates both the player-substitution rules and the re-entry rules, the unreported/illegal player shall be ejected and subject to illegal-player penalties.*
- b) *Violation of the re-entry rule may be reported at any time to the umpire.*
- 2) A starting player removed from the pitching position as a result of a second charged defensive conference in one inning:
- Cannot return to the pitching position
 - May re-enter the game at another position.

EFFECT: The pitcher shall be ejected if they return to the pitching position and delivers one pitch.

6.7 Courtesy Runners (CR)

The team on offense (at bat) may use a courtesy runner (CR) for the catcher and/or pitcher at any time. The catcher and pitcher are identified as those players who actually were playing those positions at the end of the previous half-inning. In the top of the first inning ONLY, the catcher and pitcher are identified as the players listed on the line-up card. Neither the catcher, nor the pitcher is required to leave the game under this rule. All courtesy runners must be entered for the pitcher and catcher at any time.

SECTION 6 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

- 1) First option for courtesy runner: A courtesy runner must be an eligible substitute currently not in the game.

The CR may:

- a) Run for the catcher or pitcher anytime during the same game.
- b) Run for the designated player, if the designated player was physically catching or pitching at the end of the previous half-inning.

- 2) **The CR may not:**

- a) Run for both the catcher and the pitcher during the same inning.
- b) Run for the designated player, if the designated player is batting for the catcher or the pitcher.
- c) When on base, be replaced by another courtesy runner, nor by the catcher or pitcher for whom she is running.

Exception: Another courtesy runner, catcher or pitcher may run should an injury occur.

- d) Be used during the inning a substitute entered to bat for the catcher, even if she re-entered.
- e) Be used during the inning a substitute entered to bat for the pitcher, even if she re-entered.

Exception: Should any offensive player be unable to continue for any reason or injured, with no substitutes available, the courtesy runner must be used to replace the player and enters the game as a substitute. If the courtesy runner is still on base, the catcher or pitcher for whom she is running must return as a base-runner.

- 3) The coach of the team on offense (at bat) must report each use of the courtesy runner to the plate umpire, otherwise, they are considered an unreported substitute. A player who violates the courtesy runner rule or is not eligible is considered to be an illegal substitute.

SECTION 7 – BLOCKED BALL

Blocked Ball - A live thrown or batted ball that contacts: (1) dead-ball terrain; or (2) contacts game personnel in unauthorized areas, non-game personnel, an object that is neither part of the official playing area or official game equipment, loose equipment.

7.1 Foul Batted Blocked Ball

A foul batted ball becomes blocked when it contacts loose equipment belonging to either team or non-game/game personnel.

EFFECT: A foul ball is called. The ball is dead. Runners return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

7.2 Fair Batted Blocked Ball

A fair batted ball becomes blocked:

- 1) When it contacts loose offensive equipment on the playing field, but not involved in the game.

EFFECT: The ball is dead.

- o **No one is called out, if no apparent play is obvious. Each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time the ball became blocked.**
 - o **Interference is ruled, if the blocked ball prevented the defense from making a play. The runner closest to home at the time of the interference shall be declared out and other runners must return to the last base legally touched before the batted ball hit the loose equipment.**
- 2) When it contacts loose equipment belonging to the defense.
 - 3) When it deflects off a defensive player and crosses into dead-ball territory (excluding a ball deflected over the home-run fence in fair territory); or passes an infielder (excluding the pitcher), deflects off a runner or umpire, and crosses into dead-ball territory, provided no other infielder has a chance to make a play.
 - 4) When it wedges under, bounces over or passes through a fence or any designated boundary of the playing field; or lodges in the shrubbery, in the fence or in the vines on the fence.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is awarded second base and credited with a double (two-base hit). Each runner is awarded two bases from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 5) When it strikes the foul pole, above the fence level, or leaves the playing field in fair territory without touching the ground or going through the fence.

SECTION 7 – BLOCKED BALL

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter-runner is entitled to a home run, the base runner(s) are awarded home plate.

7.3 Equipment Blocked Ball

- 1) No loose equipment (i.e., hats, mitts/gloves, jackets, helmets, on-deck batter's bats, balls) detached parts of a player's uniform or miscellaneous items, other than that being legally used in the game at the time, should be within playable territory as it could cause a blocked ball. Official equipment which may be within playable territory with no effect includes the catcher's mask and helmet, the batter's bat, umpire paraphernalia, and any helmet which has unintentionally fallen off the head of a defensive or offensive player during the course of play.
- 2) When a ball becomes lodged in the attached equipment or clothing of an umpire or offensive player.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter and each base runner are awarded the bases they would have reached had the ball not become lodged.

- 3) When a ball becomes lodged in the attached equipment or clothing of a defensive player.

EFFECT: The ball is live until it is judged by the umpire to no longer be playable, at which time it is declared dead.

- 4) No base runner may intentionally remove her helmet or other personal equipment to purposely interfere with a thrown or batted ball.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The runner is out. Each other base runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

7.4 Live Throw Blocked Ball

A live thrown ball becomes blocked:

- 1) When it is overthrown and crosses into dead-ball territory.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter and each runner are awarded two bases from their respective positions when the ball left the fielder's hand.

Exception: When a fielder loses possession of the ball, such as on an attempted tag, and the ball becomes blocked, each runner is awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the ball became blocked.

Notes:

- a) *The direction that a runner is headed when an overthrow occurs has no bearing on the award.*
- b) *When a runner touches the next base and returns to her original base, the original base she left is considered the last base touched for the purpose of an overthrow award.*
- c) *If two runners are between the same bases when an overthrown ball leave(s) the fielder's hand, the award is based on the position of the lead runner (i.e., two runners between first and second will be awarded*

SECTION 7 – BLOCKED BALL

d) Second and third; however, if two runners are between second and third, both will be awarded home).

- 2) When it contacts loose offensive equipment on the playing field, but not involved in the game.

EFFECT:

- **The ball is dead. If no apparent play is obvious, no one is called out. Each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time the ball became blocked.**
- **If the blocked ball prevented the defense from making a play, interference is ruled. The runner closest to home at the time of the interference shall be declared out, and each other runner must return to the last base legally touched before the thrown ball hit the loose equipment.**

- 3) When it contacts loose defensive equipment on the playing field, but not involved in the game.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter and each runner are awarded two bases from their respective positions when the ball left the fielder's hand. If two runners are between the same bases, the awarded is based on the position of the lead runner.

7.5 Catch and Carry Blocked Ball

A live thrown or batted ball becomes blocked when it is caught by a fielder and carried into dead-ball territory. This is generally referred to as a "catch and carry."

7.6 Pitched Blocked Ball

A pitched ball becomes blocked when it goes under or lodges in, over or through the backstop or into dead-ball territory.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. If the batter receives a base on balls or legally advances on a dropped third strike and the pitch becomes blocked, she will be awarded first base only. All runners are awarded one base from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

7.7 Game Personnel in Unauthorized Areas

A fair thrown or batted ball becomes blocked when it contacts game personnel in unauthorized areas. (e.g. outside the dugout, but in the field of play).

- 1) When a fair batted ball contacts a member of the defensive team.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is awarded second base and credited with a double (two-base hit). Each runner is awarded two bases from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

SECTION 7 – BLOCKED BALL

2) When a fair batted ball contacts a member of the offensive team.

EFFECT:

- **The ball is dead. If no apparent play is obvious, no one is called out. Each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time the ball became blocked.**
- **If the blocked ball prevented the defense from making a play, interference is ruled. The runner closest to home at the time of the interference shall be declared out, and each other runner must return to the last base legally touched before the batted ball became blocked.**

3) When a live thrown ball contacts a member of the defensive team.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter and each runner are awarded two bases from their respective positions when the ball left the fielder's hand. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.

4) When a live thrown ball contacts a member of the offensive team.

EFFECT:

- **The ball is dead. If no apparent play is obvious, no one is called out. Each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time the ball became blocked.**
- **If the blocked ball prevented the defense from making a play, interference is ruled. The runner closest to home at the time of the interference shall be declared out and each other runner must return to the last base legally touched before the thrown ball became blocked.**

SECTION 8 – INTERFERENCE & OBSTRUCTION

Interference

Interference is an act that denies a defensive player a reasonable opportunity to make a play (throw/field) anywhere on the playing field. The act may be unintentional or intentional, and the ball must have been playable.

Interference may be caused by individual offensive players (runner, batter-runner, batter, on-deck batter), umpires, coaches, non-game personnel or spectators, and by the offensive team as a whole or by loose equipment that belongs to them.

8.1 Interference by On-Deck Batter

The on-deck batter may not interfere with the defensive player's reasonable opportunity to make a play.

EFFECT:

- **If the interference is with a defensive player fielding a fly ball, the ball is dead, the batter is out and each other runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.**
- **If the interference involves a pitched or thrown ball, the ball is dead. The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out and each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference, unless forced to advance.**

8.2 Interference by Batter

Batter interference occurs while the batter is at bat and before she completes her turn at bat.

- 1) The batter shall not step directly in front of the catcher, from one batter's box to the other batter's box while the pitcher is in the position ready to pitch.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 2) The batter shall not hinder the catcher or any other fielder from throwing or catching the ball by stepping out of the batter's box, or intentionally hinder a player (e.g., Play at home plate or a pickoff/steal throw) while standing within the batter's box.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out. Each runner must return to the last base that, in the umpire's judgment, was legally touched at the time of the interference.

Exceptions:

- a) If there are fewer than two outs and a runner is advancing to home plate, the runner, instead of the batter is out. The ball is dead.

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- b) If the batter strikes out and interferes with the catcher's attempt to throw out a runner, the runner is also out. The ball is dead.
- c) If the batter interferes with the catcher's return throw to the pitcher (catcher is not making a play on a base runner) and the runner advances safely, the umpire should call time and return the runner(s) to the base occupied at the time of the accidental interference.

Notes:

- 1) *The batter's box is not a "safe haven" for the batter when a play is being made at the plate.*
 - 2) *If the catcher or her throw to a base hits the bat or the batter while she is in the batter's box, the ball is live and there is no interference, unless the contact is intentional and initiated by the batter.*
- 3) The batter may not swing and miss a pitched ball and then intentionally hit it on a second swing or after it bounces off the catcher or her glove/mitt.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

Note: If the batter swings and misses the pitched ball, but accidentally makes contact on the follow-through, it is not interference. The ball is dead. All runners must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 4) The batter may not release the bat in such a way that it prevents the catcher from making a play or hits the catcher.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

Note: If the catcher trips over the bat after the batter merely dropped it, there is no interference.

8.3 Interference by Batter-Runner

- 1) The batter may not, after slapping/bunting/hitting a fair ball, contact the ball with the bat a second time in fair territory. For example:

- a) The batter may not contact the ball a second time when she is out of the batter's box and the bat is still in her hand(s).

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- b) The batter may not throw or drop the bat in such that it lands on (hits) the ball in fair territory.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

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Exceptions:

- (1) If the bat is out of the batter's hands (on the ground), the ball rolls against the bat and in the umpire's judgment, there was no intent to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is live, no one is out for interference, and base runner(s) may advance with liability to be put out.
 - (a) It is a foul ball if the ball touches the bat in fair territory and then rolls to foul ground and stops. It is a foul ball if the ball rolls against the bat in foul territory.
 - (b) The ball remains live if the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory. It is a fair ball if it stops or is touched in fair territory.
- (2) If the batter, after contacting a fair ball, is still within the batter's box and is still holding the bat in her hand(s) when she contacts the ball a second time in fair territory, a foul ball is ruled; the ball is dead; and each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.
- c) The batter may not throw the whole bat into fair territory and thereby with a defensive player attempting to make a play.
(Intentionally or unintentionally)

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch. In the umpire's judgment, if interference prevented a possible double play, two outs (the player being played on and the batter) may be declared.

Notes:

- a) *No interference is called if the batter simply drops her bat and the catcher trips over it.*
 - b) *It is a foul ball if a part of the bat is touched by the batted ball in foul territory.*
 - c) *The ball remains live and there is no interference if the bat breaks and a part of it is hit by the batted ball in fair territory or a part of it hits a fielder or a runner.*
- 2) The batter-runner shall not interfere with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball. For example:
 - a) The batter-runner may not, after contacting a foul ball, intentionally deflect the course of the ball in any manner while running to first.
 - b) The batter-runner may not make contact with a fair, batted ball before reaching first base.
 - 3) The batter-runner may not interfere with the catcher's attempt to field a third strike.

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Note: If both players' actions are appropriate to the situation and contact could not be avoided, it is inadvertent contact and neither interference or obstruction.

- 4) The batter-runner may not interfere with a fielder's attempt to throw or to receive a thrown ball. For example:

- a) The batter runner may not slide into first base to interfere with another runner or the play.
- b) The batter-runner may not run outside the runner's lane and, in the judgment of the umpire, interfere with the fielder taking the throw at first base.

Exception: The batter-runner may run outside the runner's lane to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball and/or to touch the base on the last stride.

Note: The batter-runner is considered outside the runner's lane if either foot is completely outside either line and in contact with the ground.

- 5) Double bases (white and orange) at first base are encouraged for safety.

- a) Fielders and runners may switch sides of the base, if the throw is coming from foul territory.

Note: Batter-runners should use the orange base when double bases are being used.

- 6) While out of the batter's box, the batter-runner may not intentionally interfere with a thrown ball.

Note: A batter-runner being hit with a thrown ball does not necessarily constitute interference.

EFFECT {2)-3)-4)-6)}

- **The ball is dead. The batter-runner is out. Each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.**
- **In the judgment of the umpire, if the interference is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the runner closest to home plate shall also be called out.**

- 7) The batter-runner may not interfere with a play at home plate in an attempt to prevent an obvious out at home plate.

- a) The ball is dead. Runner at the plate and the batter-runner are both out. Each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

8.4 Coach Interference

- 1) A coach may not interfere with a fielder who has a reasonable opportunity to make a play on a foul fly ball.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

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- 2) A coach, while in or out of the coach's box, shall not intentionally interfere with a thrown ball or interfere with the defensive team's opportunity to make a play on another runner.
- 3) The third base coach shall not run in the direction of home plate (on or near the baseline) thereby drawing a throw with a runner in scoring position and while a fielder is attempting to make a play.

EFFECT: (2)-(3) The ball is dead. The runner closest to home plate shall be declared out, and each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

Exception: If a thrown ball accidentally touches a coach in foul territory, the ball is live. It is not interference if the individual tries to evade the ball or is not aware that the ball is coming.

- 4) A coach (or anyone other than another runner who has not yet crossed home plate) may not physically assist a base runner while she is actively running the bases and the ball is in play.

EFFECT: The ball is live. The assisted runner is out. Each other runner may advance with liability of being put out.

8.5 Non-game Authorized Personnel Interference

If a live thrown or batted ball accidentally hits a non-game personnel, the ball remains live. It is unintentional interference if the individual tries to avoid the ball or is not aware of the ball coming. However, no non-game personnel may intentionally interfere with a thrown or live batted ball.

EFFECT: The umpire shall award the offended team the appropriate compensation, that in her/his opinion would have resulted had interference not taken place. The offending non-game personnel shall be removed from the field.

Note: Authorized media may be in foul territory but must be ready to react quickly to avoid being hit by an overthrown or batted ball. All photographic equipment must be carried. (May use a monopod, but not a tripod) No equipment may be left on the ground.

8.6 Runner Interference

- 1) The base runner may not interfere with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball. For example.
 - a) The base runner may not intentionally kick a ball that an infielder has missed.
 - b) The base runner may not contact an untouched, fair batted ball after it passes an infielder, if another fielder has a chance to make a play.

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- c) The base runner may not contact a fair batted ball, while off base, before it touches a fielder or before it passes an infielder (other than the pitcher) who has a reasonable chance to make a play.
- d) Physical contact by the base runner with an infielder attempting to field a fair batted ball shall be interference, provided the fielder had a reasonable chance to make a play and was prevented from doing so.

Note: If both player's action is appropriate to the situation and contact could not be avoided, it is inadvertent contact and neither interference nor obstruction.

- i) When the defensive player, while watching the flight of a ball, bumps a runner who is standing on a base and fails to make a catch on a catchable ball, the runner shall not be called out unless the hindrance is intentional. A runner must vacate any space needed by an infielder to make a play on a batted ball, unless the runner has contact with a legally occupied base when the hindrance occurs. This is an exception to the rule that defensive players must be given the opportunity to field the ball anywhere on the playing field without being hindered.
- ii) Merely jumping over the ball or running in front of a fielder while proceeding to the next base is not interference, even though it may be distracting to the fielder or screen the view of the ball. The runner may not at any time unnecessarily wave her arms or verbally distract the fielder.
- iii) It is still interference if a batted ball is misplayed and remains in front of a fielder such that the fielder still has an opportunity to make a play, and the runner contacts the fielder.
 - Exception:** If the misplayed ball bounds away or past the fielder and then contact occurs as the fielder and runner collide, this may be considered inadvertent contact, obstruction or interference.
- iv) Interference occurs when the ball ricochets off one defensive player, and another player still has the opportunity to make a play, but the runner intentionally interferes with the second fielder.
- v) If two fielders try to field a batted ball and the runner contacts one or both, the umpire shall decide which one is entitled to field the ball, and that fielder only is entitled to protection.
- vi) Interference occurs when the ball ricochets off one defensive player, and another player still has the opportunity to make a play, but the runner intentionally interferes with the second fielder.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter-runner is awarded first base and credited with a base hit. The offending runner is out. If

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forced, (by the batter-runner being awarded first base) each other runner advances one base without liability to be put out. If unforced, each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of interference.

Exceptions:

- a) The batter is out if the interference prevents the fielder from catching a routine fly ball.
 - b) If the interference, in the judgment of the umpire is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play and occurs before the runner is put out, the runner being played on also shall be called out.
- 2) A base runner may not interfere with a fielder attempting to throw the ball.
3) The base runner may not intentionally interfere with a thrown ball.

Note: A runner hit with a thrown ball does not necessarily constitute interference.

EFFECT: (2& 3) The ball is dead. The offending runner is out, and the batter-runner is awarded first base and credited with a base hit. If unforced, each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference. If forced, each other runner advances one base without liability to be put out.

Exception: If the interference, in the judgment of the umpire is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play and occurs before the offending runner is put out, the player being played on also shall be called out.

- 4) The runner who is preceding the batter-runner and who is not yet out may not intentionally interfere in the judgment of the umpire with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or to throw a ball in an attempt to complete the play.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter-runner and runner are out. Each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

- 5) A base runner, after scoring or being declared out, may not interfere with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out. Each base runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

- 6) A base runner may not remain on her feet and intentionally, with great force, crash into a defensive player (holding the ball and waiting to apply a tag).

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The offending player shall be declared out, even if the defensive player loses possession of the ball. Each other base

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runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

Exceptions:

- a) If the intentional crash occurs after the runner is called out, the runner closest to home plate also shall be declared out.
 - b) If the runner intentionally crashes into a defensive player holding the ball before she (the runner) is put out and, in the umpire's judgment, it is an attempt to break up an obvious double play, the player being played on also shall be called out.
- If, in the umpire's judgment, the collision is flagrant, the runner shall be declared out and also ejected from the contest. The ball is dead. Each other base runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

Notes:

- a) *In order to avoid a deliberate crash ruling, the runner can go around the defender (within 3 feet), slide, jump over the top of the defender holding the ball, or return to the previous base touched.*
 - b) *Should an act of interference (offensive) occur after any obstruction (defensive), enforcement of the interference penalty would take precedence provided both violations involve the same base runner. For example: If an obstructed runner intentionally crashes into a fielder holding the ball, the obstruction call will be disregarded, and the runner will be called out for interference.*
- 7) It is not interference, and the runner is not out:
- a) When the runner is hit with a fair untouched batted ball (that has not touched or passed a base) while standing in foul territory and no infielder has a reasonable chance to make a play.
 - b) When the bat breaks and a part of it is hit by the batted ball in fair territory or a part of it hits a fielder or a runner.
 - c) When a batted ball is misplayed, the ball bounds away or past the fielder, and then the fielder and runner collide. This is considered inadvertent contact.
 - d) When the runner is hit by a fair batted ball after it touches or is touched by any fielder (including the pitcher), and she could not avoid contact with the ball.
 - e) When the runner is hit with a fair, untouched batted ball that has passed an infielder (other than the pitcher) and, in the umpire's judgment, no other fielder had a reasonable chance to make a play. When said ball contacts the runner while still in flight it shall be considered a ground ball; it cannot be caught as a fly ball.

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- f) When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball and the runner comes into contact with the one who, in the umpire's judgment, could not have made a play.

EFFECT: (a-f) The ball is live. All runners (including the batter-runner) may advance with liability to be put out.

- g) When the runner is hit by a fair batted ball while in contact with the base, unless she deliberately interferes with the ball or a fielder making a play.

EFFECT: The ball is live or dead depending on the position of the fielder closest to the bases:

- **The ball is live if the closest defensive player is in front of the base. All runners (including the batter-runner) may advance with liability to be put out.**
- **The ball is dead if the closest defensive player is behind the base. The batter-runner is awarded first base and credited with a base hit. If forced, each runner advances one base with no liability to be put out. If not forced, each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.**

8.7 Spectator Interference

No spectator(s) shall enter the field or reach out of the stands and interfere with play. The stands belong to the spectators and the field belongs to the fielders. *Exception:* It is not interference if the fielder reaches into the stands or over the fence.

EFFECT:

- **The ball is dead. The umpire shall award the offended team the appropriate compensation (such as: an out, extra bases) that, in her/his opinion, would have resulted had interference not taken place.**
- **If the act clearly prevented a fielder from catching a fly ball in the field of play, the ball is dead, the batter is out and the umpire shall award the offended team the appropriate compensation (such as: an out, return runners to bases) that, in her/his opinion, would have resulted had interference not taken place.**

8.8 Team Interference (Offensive)

- 1) No offensive team personnel shall stand or gather around a base to which a runner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders and adding to the difficulty of making the play. This includes but is not limited to: players not at bat, on deck or base, coaches not in the coach's box, trainers, scorekeepers, managers and bat persons.

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EFFECT: The ball is dead. The runner is out. Each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

- 2) Offensive team personnel, other than base coaches, shall not touch a batter who has hit an out-of-the-park home run until they have contacted home plate.

EFFECT: The umpire shall issue a warning for a first offense in the game. For a second offense, the ball is dead and the batter is out and credited with the last base legally touched at the time of the interference. Each other base runner must return to the last legally touched at the time of the interference.

- 3) Offensive team personnel shall not interfere with a defensive player attempting to field a fly ball.

EFFECT: The batter is out. The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

8.9 Umpire Interference

- 1) Umpire interference occurs:

- a) When a fair, untouched batted ball strikes the person, clothing, attached equipment of an umpire before touching a fielder (including the pitcher)
- b) When a fair, untouched batted ball strikes the person, clothing, attached equipment of an umpire before passing a fielder (other than the pitcher), or after passing an infielder (including the pitcher) but another fielder had a reasonable chance to make a play.

EFFECT: (a-b) The ball is dead. The batter-runner is awarded first base and credited with a base hit.

- i) If forced, each base runner advances one base with no liability to be put out.
- ii) If not forced, each base runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

Exception: It is not interference and the ball remains in play if the ball: (1) hits the umpire after passing a fielder, other than the pitcher, and no other infielder has a reasonable chance to make a play; or (2) hits the umpire after touching a fielder (including the pitcher).

Note: When said ball touches the umpire while still in flight, it shall be considered a ground ball. It cannot be caught as a fly ball.

- c) When the plate umpire or her/his clothing interferes with the catcher's attempt to throw out a runner on a steal or pick-off attempt.

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EFFECT: Delayed dead ball is signaled. If the runner is ruled out, the ball remains live and there is no interference. If the runner is not out, she must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

Note: It is not interference if a thrown or pitched ball strikes an umpire. The ball is live and each base runner is entitled to advance with liability to be put out.

OBSTRUCTION (Defensive)

8.10 Obstruction

Obstruction is the act of the defensive team member that impedes the progress of a batter-runner or runner who is legally running bases, unless the fielder is in possession of the ball, in the act of fielding a batted ball or hinders or impedes a batter's attempt to make contact with a pitched ball.

- 1) The defensive player must have possession of the ball. When a play is about to happen, a defensive player may not block the baseline or base without possession of the ball.
 - a) If the defensive player does not have the ball, it is the responsibility of the fielder to avoid and not hamper the runner's progress, unless the fielder is in the act of fielding a batted ball.
 - b) If the defensive player has the ball, it is the runner's responsibility to avoid the fielder.
 - i) The act may be intentional or unintentional.
- 2) Whenever obstruction occurs, whether a play is being made on a runner or not, the umpire will declare obstruction and indicate/signal a delayed dead ball. The ball remains live until the end of the play at which time; the umpire will notify the offensive head coach of her/his options, if any.

Note: If other runners are advancing and an umpire accidentally calls "Timeout/Time" following a play on an obstructed runner, the method for placement of the other runners is: If they have not reached half way to the next base, they must return to the previous base. However, if they have advanced over half way, they are allowed to advance to the next base.

- 3) An obstructed runner is still required to touch all bases in proper order, or she could be called out on a proper appeal by the defensive team.
- 4) An obstructed runner may not be called out between the two bases where she was obstructed unless one of the following occurs:
 - a) When another violation is being played upon.
 - b) The obstructed runner commits an act of interference.
 - c) The obstructed runner passes another runner.
 - d) A proper appeal is made for leaving a base before a fly ball was first touched.

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- e) A proper appeal is made for missing a base.
 - f) The obstructed runner, after being obstructed, safely obtains the base she would have been awarded, in the umpire's judgment, had there been no obstruction and there is a subsequent play on a different runner. The obstructed runner is no longer protected if she leaves the base.
- 5) If an obstructed runner is awarded a base she would have made had there been no obstruction and a preceding runner is on that base, the obstructed runner will be awarded that base, and the preceding runner shall be entitled to the next base without liability to be put out.
 - 6) If the obstructed runner attempts to advance past the base she would have reached had there not been obstruction or past the base she would have been awarded for the obstruction, she is running with liability to be put out unless she is between the two bases when she was obstructed. If she is put out, she remains out. The ball remains live.
 - 7) Should an act of interference occur after any obstruction, enforcement of the interference effect takes precedence provided both violations involve the same base runner.

8.11 Types of Obstruction

Obstruction includes:

- 1) **Catcher Obstruction.** The catcher shall not obstruct, prevent or hinder the batter's attempt to make contact with a pitched ball.

EFFECT: Delayed dead ball is signaled.

- **If the batter contacts the ball and reaches first base safely and each other runner has advanced at least one base on the batted ball, catcher obstruction is canceled. All action as a result of the batted ball stands. Once a runner has passed a base, she is considered to have reached that base, even if she missed it.**
- **If the batter does not reach first base safely or if one of the other runners does not advance at least one base, the coach of the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play. If the coach does not take the result of the play:**
 - i) **The batter is awarded first base and an error is charged to the catcher.**
 - ii) **If forced, each base runner advances one base with no liability to be put out. If not forced, each base runner returns to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch. Exception: If the catcher steps on or in front of home plate or touches the batter or her bat while a pitched ball is on the way to the plate and there is a runner on third attempting to**

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score on a squeeze play, each base runner advances one base without liability to be put out whether forced or not.

Note: If a batter, during preliminary warm-up swings, hits the catcher or the catcher's mitt/glove, the umpire should immediately call "Timeout/Time" and not obstruction. The pitch or swing should not be allowed since the batter's concentration / rhythm could be affected. Catcher's obstruction involving a batter should be called only on the batter's attempt to make contact with the pitch.

- 2) **Flagrant Player Obstruction:** The fielder shall not at any time deliberately (with excessive force) impede the runner, batter or batter-runner.
EFFECT: Delayed dead ball is signaled. The appropriate obstruction effect is applied, and in addition, the offender shall be ejected without warning.

- 3) **Fielder Obstruction:** A fielder who is not in possession of the ball, not in the act of fielding a batted ball, may not impede the runner, batter or batter-runner. A fielder may not fake a tag (without the ball) on a runner returning or advancing to a base.

EFFECT: If the obstructed runner, batter-runner, batter is put out before reaching the base, they would have reached the base had there not been obstruction, the obstructed player shall be awarded the base they would have reached, in the judgment of the umpire, had there not been obstruction. Subsequent violation by the same individual may result in a one-base award to the obstructed player and each other runner forced to advance.

Exceptions:

- a) A fielder shall not position herself in the runner's line of vision to intentionally distract the runner or intentionally prohibit her from seeing the first touch of a fly ball or the release of the pitch.
- b) A fielder shall not at any time obstruct a runner returning to or rounding a base. If there is no immediate play or a throw is not made, a fielder who is waiting to receive a ball (throw) may not impede the progress or return of the runner.

EFFECT: (a – b)

i) Delayed dead ball

- (1) **First violation: The umpire shall issue a warning to the offending individual and notify the coach.**
- (2) **Subsequent violation: By the same individual shall result in a one-base award to the obstructed runner and each other runner forced to advance. The awards shall be to the base beyond the base where the obstruction**

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occurred unless the runner safely advances further on her own. In which case, no award is given.

- c) A fielder shall not at any time obstruct a runner from her base path during a rundown and prohibit her from returning to or advancing to a base.

EFFECT: Delayed dead ball is signaled.

- i) If the obstructed runner is safe or put out at the base beyond the one she would have reached had there not been obstruction, the ball remains live until the conclusion of the play. The umpire will then notify the offensive coach of her/his options, if any.
 - ii) If the obstructed runner is apparently put out before reaching the base she would have reached had there not been obstruction, a dead ball is called. The obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction will be awarded the base(s) she/they would have reached had there not been obstruction.
- d) A fielder shall not act in a manner to distract the batter or position herself in the batter's line of vision.

EFFECT: Delayed dead ball is signaled.

- i) If the batter contacts the ball and reaches first base safely and each other runner has advanced at least one base on the batted ball, all action as a result of the batted ball stands. Once a runner has passed a base, she is considered to have reached the base, even if she misses it.
 - ii) If the batter does not reach first base safely or if one of the other runners does not advance at least one base, the coach of the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or awarding a ball to the batter and advancing each other runner one base. If the pitch is "ball four" or hits the batter, the batter is awarded first base and each runner is awarded one base.
 - iii) The pitch does not have to be released.
 - iv) The umpire shall issue a warning to the offending individual and notify the coach. Subsequent violation by the same player shall result in ejection.
- 4) **Equipment Obstruction:** A fielder shall not use her cap, helmet, mask, chest protector, glove/mitt or any part of her uniform that is detached from its proper place on her person to intentionally contact or catch a fair batted, thrown or pitched ball.

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EFFECT: Delayed dead ball is signaled.

- i) If equipment interferes with a fair batted ball or with a batted foul ball that, in the opinion of the umpire, might become fair, the batter-runner and each other runner is awarded three bases from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch but may advance farther with liability to be put out.**
- ii) If the illegal catch or touch is made on a fair hit ball that, in the judgment of the umpire, would have cleared the home run fence in flight, the batter-runner is entitled to a home run, and each base runner is awarded home plate. The ball may have been prevented from going over the fence by detached player equipment which is thrown, tossed, kicked or held by a fielder.**
- iii) If equipment interferes with a thrown ball, the batter runner and each other runner is awarded two bases from the last base legally touched at the time of the throw but may advance farther with liability to be put out. Exception: If no play is apparent, there is no penalty.**
- iv) If equipment interferes with a pitched ball, the base runner(s) is awarded one base from the base occupied at the time of the pitch but may advance farther with liability to be put out. Exception: If no play is apparent, there is no penalty.**

SECTION 9 – PITCHING

9.1 Defensive Positioning Required for a Legal Pitch

- 1) The pitcher is considered to be in the pitching position when with her hands apart, she steps forward, puts both feet on the pitcher's plate and the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- 2) The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without being in possession of the ball, and she may not simulate the pitching position with or without the ball when near the pitcher's plate.
- 3) The catcher must be within the catcher's box from the time the pitcher steps on the pitcher's plate until the pitch is released. No part of the catcher's feet may be outside the lines until the pitch is released.

Exception: When the batter is positioned in the front of the batter's box, the catcher may move closer to the plate without effect. The catcher, however, must avoid catcher's obstruction as the batter legally has the right to the entire batter's box.

- 4) All outfielders and infielders must be in fair territory from the time the pitcher steps on the pitcher's plate until the pitch has been released. A fielder is considered in the field of play if her feet are touching the line or are in fair territory.

EFFECT: Delayed dead ball is signaled, and illegal pitch enforced (See Rule 9.8)

PITCHING PROCEDURES

9.2 Taking Signals

- 1) Before starting a pitch, the pitcher must comply with the following:
 - a) The pitcher is considered in the pitching position when she has her hands apart, her pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate, both feet on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate, the hips in line with first and third bases and the catcher is in the position to receive the pitch.
 - b) The ball must be held and remain in one hand, either gloved or bare.
 - c) The ball may be held behind, at the side or in front of the body.
Note: Rolling (not tossing) the ball is legal as long as contact is maintained with the hand (including the wrist)
 - d) While in the pitching position and taking the signal, the pitcher must take or appear to take a signal. The signal need not come from the catcher.

Note: The rule does not preclude the pitcher from taking an earlier signal from someone who indicates the desired pitch and/or location nor the pitcher from referring to an arm band prior to complying with the rule.

- e) the pitcher's hands must come together in view of the home plate umpire for not more than five (5) seconds.

9.3 Start of the Pitch

The pitch officially begins and cannot be discontinued once the hands have separated after coming together.

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PITCHING: The pitching motion consists of the stride/step, windup and delivery

9.4 Stride / Step

- 1) Any part of each foot in contact with the ground or pitcher's plate must be completely within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate.
- 2) The stride foot may be on or behind the pitcher's plate as far back as desired.
- 3) Once the pitcher initially sets the toe of her stride foot, she may not step back any further to increase the distance behind the pitcher's plate.
- 4) Having pushed off from the pitcher's plate, the rear pivot foot must maintain contact with the ground without creating a second push-off point before the stride foot lands.
 - a) No crow hopping is allowed. The pitcher may not replant, gain a second starting point and push off her pivot foot. Once having lost contact with the pitcher's plate, the pivot foot may trail on the ground but may not bear weight again until the pitch is released.
 - b) No leaping is allowed. The pitcher may not become airborne on the initial drive from the pitcher's plate. The rear foot must drag / slide maintaining contact with the ground.

EFFECT: (9.4 / 1-4) Illegal Pitch (See Rule 9.8)

9.5 The Windup

The windup phase of the pitch starts when the hands come together and ends when the hands separate. Any windup desired may be used provided she does not, after having taken the signal and bringing her hands together:

- 1) Make any movement to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- 2) Separate her hands and then return the ball to both hands.
- 3) Stop and change directions more than twice.

EFFECT: (9.5 / 1-3) Illegal Pitch (See Rule 9.8)

9.6 Delivery

The delivery phase of the pitch begins when the hands separate and ends with release of the pitch. In delivering the ball to the batter, the pitcher must comply with the following:

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- 1) Once the hands have separated and pitching arm begins the clockwise motion that will result in the release of the pitch, not more than 1 ½ revolutions of the pitching arm may occur.
- 2) The stride/step and delivery of the ball to the batter must take place at the same time.
- 3) The pitched ball must be released underhand
 - a) The wrist must not be farther from the hip than the elbow.
 - b) The hand must be below the hip.
- 4) The release of the ball and the follow-through of the wrist and hand must be past the straight line of the body and forward.
- 5) After releasing the ball, the pitcher may not make another arm revolution.

EFFECT: (9.6 / 1-5) – Illegal Pitch (See Rule 9.8)

THE PITCH

9.7 Dropped During Pitch

- 1) The ball is dropped by the pitcher before her hands have come together and then separated.

EFFECT: The ball is live. There is no penalty. Base runner(s) may advance with liability of being put out.

- 2) The ball accidentally slips from the pitcher's hand during the act of delivering the pitch.

EFFECT: If the batter does not have a reasonable opportunity to hit the ball, a defensive player may retrieve it. The ball remains live. A ball is awarded to the batter. Base runner(s) may advance with liability to be put out.

- 3) The pitcher shall not intentionally bounce, roll or drop the ball in order to prevent the batter from hitting a pitch.

EFFECT – Illegal Pitch (See Rule 9.8)

9.8 Illegal Pitch

Any pitch by the pitcher that is in violation of the pitching rules. When an illegal pitch occurs, it shall be called immediately by the base or plate umpire.

EFFECT:

- a) The plate umpire calls “Illegal” for both the batter and catcher to hear clearly. The base umpire calls “Illegal” for nearby players to hear clearly. Failure of player to hear the call shall not void the call.
- b) At the same time, the umpire gives the delayed dead-ball signal and waits to call “Timeout/Time” until the pitch has reached the plate or play has been completed.
 - i) If the batter is hit by an illegal pitch, the coach has the option of a called “ball” or the “hit by pitch”.

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- ii) If the batter does not reach first base safely or if any runner fails to advance at least one base, the coach of the offensive team may choose the result of the play or the standard effect for an illegal pitch.
- iii) Illegal pitch, which is that a ball is awarded to the batter and no runner(s) automatically advance, unless forced or the result of the play.
- iv) If the batter reaches first base safely on ball four as a result of an illegal pitch, other runner(s) not forced, may run at their own risk.
- v) The umpire who called the illegal pitch shall explain the violation to both the pitcher and her coach, if requested.

9.9 Quick Pitch

A pitch, “quick pitch”, intended to catch the batter by surprise, shall be ruled as “No Pitch”.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. All subsequent action on that pitch is canceled.

9.10 No Pitch

“No Pitch” shall be acknowledged when:

- 1) While play is suspended, the pitcher pitches the ball.
- 2) The pitcher fails to allow sufficient time for a runner, who is legitimately off base, to return. (i.e., after a foul ball)
- 3) A quick pitch is delivered by the pitcher.
- 4) A runner is called out for leaving her base before the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand.
- 5) The batter is hit by a pitch out of the batter’s box assuming she did not attempt to bunt or swing.

EFFECT: (1-5) The ball is dead. All subsequent action on the pitch is canceled.

- 6) A coach or player commits any act (i.e., calls “Timeout/Time” or uses any similar word/phrase) while the ball is live and in play for the clear purpose of trying to make the pitcher deliver an illegal pitch.

EFFECT: “No Pitch” declared.

- i) Warning given to the offending team.
- ii) Repeat of any such act by any member of the team that has been warned shall result in the violator(s) being ejected from the game.

SECTION 9 – PITCHING

REGULATIONS GOVERNING PITCHING SITUATIONS

9.11 Discontinuing a Pitch / Stepping Off the Pitcher's Plate

- 1) The pitcher may remove herself legally from the pitching position (both feet on plate) by stepping backward (not forward/sideways) off the pitcher's plate before the beginning of the pitch.
- 2) The pitch officially begins and cannot legally be discontinued once the hands have separated after coming together.

EFFECT: (9.11 / 1-2) Illegal Pitch (See Rule 9.8)

9.12 Ball Rotation

- 1) To begin a game, the plate umpire should have a minimum of two game balls. (All balls must meet specifications of rule 3.1) Once the game has begun, additional balls must be supplied, as needed, by the tournament representatives / home team, as set forth in the tournament guidelines/rules.
- 2) A game ball is in play until such time that it is rejected by the umpire (scuffed, discolored or otherwise unsuitable) for play or leaves the playing field. Each pitcher shall have a choice of game balls at the start of her respective half-inning and may request a different ball at any time.
 - a) If a pitcher does not like a ball she has, she must return it to the plate umpire before receiving a different ball.
 - b) Pitcher may not hold more than one ball at a time for trial purposes.
 - c) Game may not be unduly delayed. (i.e., retrieving a particular ball that has been fouled out of play)

9.13 Foreign Substance on the Ball / Items on Pitcher

- 1) Under the supervision and view of the umpire, a resin (any drying agent) may be used. If foreign substance (including resin) are applied, the pitcher's fingers and hands must be wiped off to avoid defacing the ball or transferring substances to the ball. No player or other team personnel may apply moisture or a foreign substance to the ball nor do anything else to deface the ball.

EFFECT: For the first offense an illegal pitch shall be called. (See Rule 9.8) On the second offense, the pitcher shall be ejected.

- 2) The pitcher who brings a resin bag to the pitching circle is responsible for removing it each half-inning as she leaves the field.
- 3) The pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, fingers, forearm or thighs, wrist that an umpire considers distracting. This includes a sweatband, batting glove, loose lacing on a glove or ball colored logos.

Exception: The pitcher's hand, fingers, wrist, elbow or forearm may be taped for injury, providing the tape is a neutral color.

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- 4) Pitchers may wear casts, braces, splints or prostheses on their pitching arms, provided such devices do not cause safety risks or create unfair competitive
- 5) advantages. Any such device with exposed exterior fasteners that would present a hazard must be padded properly. Any such device should not be distracting in color and must function in a way that does not alter the natural motion of the pitching arm.

EFFECT (9.13 / 2-4) The pitcher shall remove the item upon the request of the umpire or be ejected from the game.

9.14 Intentionally Pitching at a Batter

The pitcher shall not deliberately attempt to hit the batter with a pitch.

EFFECT: If, in the judgment of the umpire, such a violation has occurred, the umpire shall warn the pitcher and both opposing coaches that future violations by any pitcher will be cause for immediate ejection of the pitcher and the head coach. If, in judgment of the umpire, the situation warrants drastic action to diffuse a potentially volatile situation, the umpire may eject without first warning her. Each coach should be warned, but the coach of the offending team may be ejected at this time if the umpire believes it is appropriate. A warning may be issued to both teams before the start of the game or at any time during the game.

9.15 Intentional Base on Balls – Options 1 or 2

- 1) Teams may elect to intentionally walk a batter at any time during the at bat, by simply having the catcher notify the home plate umpire of this intent. The request must come from the catcher, not the dugout.
- 2) All pitches by a pitcher, intentionally walking a batter (including a pitchout), must be legally pitched to the catcher and the ball is live.

EFFECT: Not delivering each pitch legally to the catcher is an illegal pitch. (See Rule 9.8) Exception: Intentionally violating the rule in order to walk the batter without pitching shall not result in a ball being awarded to the batter, but each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put out.

9.16 Returning a Pitched Ball to the Pitcher

The catcher must return the ball directly to the pitcher after a foul tip and each pitch not contacted.

Exceptions:

- a) When the batter becomes a runner.
- b) When there is a runner(s) on base.
- c) After a strikeout
- d) When a checked swing is appealed on a third strike
- e) After an attempted putout or putout made by the catcher.
- f) When the batter is not entitled to first base but runs anyway.
- g) An errant throw intended for the pitcher.

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EFFECT: The ball is dead. Runners may not advance. A ball shall be awarded to the batter. On the first offense, the offending player shall be warned. On subsequent offenses, the offender shall be ejected from the game.

9.17 Throwing to a Base from the Pitcher's Plate

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 the live-ball appeal play, the appeal is canceled.

Note: The pitcher may remove herself from the pitching position by stepping backward off the pitcher's plate before separating her hands.

EFFECT: Illegal Pitch (See Rule 9.8)

9.18 Time Allowed Between Pitches

The pitcher must be on the pitcher's plate and the batter in the batter's box within 10 seconds after receiving the ball or after the umpire calls "Play ball". After both the pitcher and batter are in position, the pitcher has 10 seconds to bring her hands together. The pitcher has not more than five (5) seconds to deliver the pitch.

EFFECT: If five seconds have elapsed and the pitcher has not yet pitched, an additional ball shall be awarded to the batter. If two minutes have elapsed and the pitcher has not yet pitched, a forfeited game shall be declared by the umpire crew in favor of the team at bat.

Exception: Intentionally violating the rule in order to walk the batter without pitching shall not result in a ball being awarded to the batter, but each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put out. On the first offense, the umpire shall issue a warning to the offending player. On the second offense, the offending player shall be ejected from the game.

9.19 Warm-Up Pitches Allowed

- 1) At the beginning of each half inning, the pitcher may throw not more than five (5) warm-up pitches. Play shall be suspended during this time.
- 2) After a pitching change, a relief pitcher may throw not more than five (5) warm-up pitches. Play shall be suspended during this time. A pitcher shall not be allowed warm-up pitches if returning to pitch in the same half-inning.

EFFECT: (9.19 / 1-2) A ball shall be awarded to the first batter faced for each excessive warm-up pitch.

- 3) If replacing a pitcher due to injury, the relief pitcher must be allowed adequate time to warm-up. Play shall be suspended at this time.
- 4) After a substantial delay caused by inclement weather, injury or delayed play by the umpire, the pitcher shall be given adequate time to warm-up.
- 5) Coaches may warm up pitchers between innings and guard warm-ups on the sideline during game.

SECTION 10 – BATTING

BATTER

10.1 On Deck Batter

- 1) The on-deck batter will be behind the batter and restricted to the on-deck circle.
- 2) The on-deck batter must wear a helmet.
- 3) The warm-up bats used by the on-deck batter must meet the specifications of Rule 3.3.
- 4) The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck circle to avoid interfering with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play, to direct a teammate attempting to score or to take her turn in the batter's box.

EFFECT:

- a) **If the on-deck batter interferes with a defensive player attempting to field a fly ball, the ball is dead, the batter shall be declared out, and each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.**
- b) **If the on-deck batter interferes with a defensive player attempting to make a play on a runner, the ball is dead, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out, and each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.**

BATTING

10.2 Legal Position in the Batter's Box

- 1) The batter has ten (10) seconds after being directed by the plate umpire to take their position in the batter's box.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. A strike is called. If this pitch is the third strike, the batter is declared out.

- 2) Both feet of the batter must be completely within the lines of the batter's box. No part of the foot may be outside the lines until the pitch is released.

EFFECT: If the umpire sees a line violation before the start of the pitch, the umpire shall call "Timeout/Time" and direct the batter to get into the box. If the batter fails to comply within 10 seconds, a strike is called. The ball is dead. No pitch has to be thrown.

- 3) The pitcher must deliver the pitch and the batter shall not leave her position in the batter's box once the pitcher has taken (simulated taking) a signal from the catcher, both hands have touched in full view of the umpire and the hands have separated.

EFFECT:

- a) **If the batter holds up her hand, steps out of the box or uses any other action as if requesting time and the pitcher legally delivers the ball, it shall be called a ball / strike, depending upon the location of the pitch. The ball remains live.**

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- b) If the pitcher hesitates or stops in her delivery as a result of the batter holding up her hand, stepping out of the box or using any other action as if requesting time, it shall not be an illegal pitch. Since both the batter and pitcher have violated the rule, “No Pitch” shall be declared.
 - c) If, in the umpire’s judgment, the batter’s action is a deliberate attempt to create an illegal pitch, the ball is dead, “No Pitch” is called, and all subsequent action on that pitch is canceled. A warning shall be issued to the offending team and the batter. A repeat of this type of act by any member of the team warned shall result in the offender being ejected from the game.
- 4) The batter may not contact the pitch (moment of bat/ball contact) when any part of the foot is touching home plate, even though she may be touching the lines of the batter’s box. In addition, the batter may not contact the pitch when an entire foot is touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter’s box.

EFFECT: Whether the ball is fair or foul, the batter shall be declared out immediately. The ball is dead.

10.3 Balls and Strikes

- 1) The strike zone is the area above home plate between the top of the batter’s knees and the bottom of the sternum when she assumes her natural batting stance. The ball must be between the vertical and horizontal plane of the strike zone to be a strike. A ball touching the ground before it reaches home plate cannot be a strike, even if it passes through the strike zone.
- a) A pitch shall be judged to be a ball or strike in relation to the batter’s natural position as the pitch crosses home plate.
 - b) A pitch shall be judged to be a ball or strike as it crosses home plate, not where it is caught by the catcher.
- 2) A called ball is awarded to the batter:
- a) When a legal pitch that is not struck by a batter touches the ground before reaching home plate, touches home plate or does not enter the strike zone.
- Note: If a pitched ball strikes the ground in front of the batter and the batter swings at it, the ball is in play if hit and strike if missed.*
- 3) A called strike is charged to the batter.
- a) For each legally pitched ball that enters the strike zone without first touching the ground. The top of the ball must be on and with the horizontal plane and either side of the ball must be on or within the vertical plane of the strike zone to be a strike.
 - b) Each legally pitched ball that is swung at by the batter and missed.

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- EFFECT: The ball is live. Each runner may advance with liability to be put out.**
- c) For each foul tip.
EFFECT: The ball is live. Each runner may advance with liability to be put out. The batter is out if it is the third strike.
- d) For each foul ball when the batter has fewer than two strikes.
EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return, without liability to be put out, to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.
- e) When the batter bunts foul after the second strike.
EFFECT: If the bunt attempt is caught in the air, the ball is live. If the bunt attempt results in a foul ball not legally caught, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and each runner must return, without liability to be put out, to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.
- f) For each batted ball that touches any part of the batter's person or clothing when she is in the batter's box and has fewer than two strikes.
- g) For each pitch that hits the batter while the ball is in the strike zone.
- h) For each pitched ball that touches any part of the batter's person as she swings and misses.
EFFECT: (10.3-3 / f-h) The ball is dead. Runners may not advance. Each runner must return, without liability to be put out, to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.
- i) When the batter fails to take their position in the batter's box within 10 seconds after being directed to by the plate umpire.
EFFECT: The ball is dead. No pitch has to be thrown. A strike is called. Each runner must remain on the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

10.4 Fair Ball

- 1) A fair batted ball shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not with respect to the position of the fielder (on fair or foul ground) at the time the ball is contacted. A legally batted ball that:
- Touched on or settles on or over fair territory between home plate and first base, or between home plate and third base.
 - Touches first, second or third base, unless a runner or fielder previously touched it while the ball was in foul territory.
 - While over or on fair territory, touches the person, attached equipment or clothing of an umpire or player.
 - First touched or first falls over or on fair territory beyond first or third base.

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e) Bounces past or over first base or third base regardless of where the ball hits after passing the base.

f) While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field beyond the home-run fence or while in flight, hits the foul pole.

Note: While in flight, when a batted ball hits the top of the home-run fence while in fair territory and then bounces over the fence, it is a home run.

10.5 Foul Ball

1) A foul grounder, line drive or fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not with respect to the position of the fielder at the time the ball is contacted.

a) The ball is touched on / settles on or over foul territory between home plate and first base or home plate and third base.

b) Touches the dirt or touches the batter or home plate and then hits the batter while she is still within the batter's box.

c) While over or on foul territory, touches the person, attached clothing or equipment of an umpire or player or any object foreign to the natural playing surface.

d) Rolls or bounces past first / third base on or over foul territory.

e) Touches the bat or touches the dirt or home plate and then hits the bat a second time while it is still in the batter's possession and the batter is still inside the batter's box.

f) First falls or is touched on or over foul territory beyond first or third base.

g) While both the runner and the ball are in foul territory, the runner interferes with a defensive player's attempt to field a batted ball.

h) Hits the pitcher's plate and rolls untouched to foul territory before reaching third or first base.

i) Goes directly from the bat to any part of the catcher's equipment or body other than her hand or gloved hand.

10.6 Foul Tip

1) A batted ball that travels directly from the bat to the catcher's hand or mitt/glove and is legally caught by the catcher.

Note: Any batted ball that travels directly from the bat, to any part of the catcher's body or equipment other than the hand(s) or mitt/glove, is a foul ball and dead. It is not a foul tip.

2) A runner may advance on a foul tip without tagging. The foul tip is treated as a non-contacted pitch.

EFFECT: (10.6 / 1-2) A strike is charged to the batter, the ball is live and each runner may advance with liability to be put out. The batter is out if it is the third strike.

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10.7 Bunts, Slaps, Hits

- 1) **HIT:** A legally batted fair ball is a hit.
 - a) No intent to contact the ball is necessary.
 - b) The ball is live.
 - c) As soon as the batter legally hits a fair ball, the batter becomes a batter-runner.
 - d) Whether forced or not, the base runners advance with liability to be put out.
 - e) If a fair-hit ball should touch a runner or umpire while still in flight, it shall be considered a ground ball. It cannot be caught as a fly ball.
- 2) **BUNT:** A bunt is a legally batted ball, not swung at, but intentionally tapped with the bat.
 - a) The dropped third strike rule applies on a missed bunt attempt with two strikes.
 - b) Holding the bat in the strike zone is considered a bunt attempt. In order to take a pitch, the bat must be withdrawn from the strike zone. Another words, pulled backward away from the ball.
 - c) A bunt that is caught in the air remains in play and live, regardless of the number of strikes on the batter, whether it is foul or fair.
 - d) If with fewer than two strikes, the batter's attempt to bunt results in a foul ball not legally caught, it is a strike and the ball is dead. With two strikes, the ball is dead and the batter is declared out.
- 3) **SLAP:** A slap hit is a batted ball that has been hit with a short, chopping motion rather than a full swing. A slapped foul is treated like any other foul ball and shall not result in an out unless caught in flight.

REGULATIONS GOVERNING BATTING

10.8 Bat

- 1) **ALTERED BAT:** A batter shall not take an altered bat into the batter's box. Any bat that has been altered shall be removed from the game.
EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter shall be declared out and ejected from the game. Each runner must return to the last base legally occupied. The bat shall be removed from the game.
- 2) **BROKEN BAT:** When the bat breaks and a part of it hits a fielder or a runner or a part of it is hit by the batted ball in fair territory, the ball remains live. It is not interference. If a part of the bat is touched by the batted ball in foul territory, it is a foul ball.
- 3) **ILLEGAL BAT:** A batter should not take an illegal bat into the batter's box.
- 4) **NON-APPROVED BAT:** A batter shall not take a non-approved bat into the batter's box.

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EFFECT: (10.8 / 3-4) The ball is dead. The batter is declared out and base runners shall return to the base last occupied at the time of the pitch. The bat shall be removed from the game. Exception: Advance is legal on a non-contacted pitch or ball four.

5) **THROWN BAT:** When a bat is thrown into fair territory, whether intentionally or not, and it interferes with a defensive player attempting to make a play, interference shall be called.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out. Base runners shall return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch. If, in the umpire's judgment, interference prevented a double play, two outs may be declared.

10.9 Batted Ball off Batter, Clothing, Attached Equipment

When a batted ball hits the dirt, home plate or the batter, and then hits the batter, the ball is dead immediately

EFFECT:

- a) **If the batter is out of the batter's box and the ball is considered fair, the batter is declared out, and each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.**
- b) **If the batter is in the batter's box, a foul ball is called, a strike is charged to the batter if she has fewer than two strikes, and each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.**
- c) **If the batter is out of the batter's box and the ball is considered foul, a foul ball is called, a strike is charged to the batter if she has fewer than two strikes, and each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.**

10.10 Batting Order

The batting order that is provided to the plate umpire must be followed throughout the game, except that a starting player may be replaced by a substitute who must take the place of the starting player in the batting order. In addition, the FLEX may replace the designated player on offense. The first batter listed on each team's line-up card shall lead off her respective team's half of the first inning. After the first inning, the first (lead-off) batter in each inning shall be the player whose name follows that of the last batter who completed her full turn at bat in the preceding inning. If the third out in an inning is made before a batter completes her turn at bat, she shall be the first batter in the next inning and she shall start with a 0-0 count.

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10.11 Batting Out of Order

- 1) When a batter fails to bat in proper order as listed on the official line-up card, the player is batting out of order.
- 2) The defensive team is the only one that can make an appeal play for batting out of order. The defensive team forfeits its right to appeal batting out of order when one illegal or legal pitch has been made to the following batter or when the pitcher and all infielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory.
- 3) The effect for batting out of order varies depending upon when the infraction is reported to the plate umpire.

EFFECT: (10.11 / 1-3) If the error is reported while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may take her place and legally assume any balls and strikes. Any runs scored or bases advanced while the incorrect batter was at bat shall be legal.

Note: A wrong batter at the plate may be corrected by the offensive team with no effect.

- a) If the error is reported after the incorrect batter has completed her turn at bat and before an illegal or legal pitch has been delivered to the following batter, or before the pitcher and all infielders clearly have vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory: (a) the player who should have batted is out; (b) all results because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base as a result of obstruction, an error, a hit batter, walk, dropped third strike or a base hit shall be nullified; (c) the next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat; (d) if the batter declared out under these circumstances is the third out, the correct batter in the next inning shall be the player who would have come to bat had the player been put out; and (e) if the third out is made on a player before the report of the infraction, an appeal may still be made in order to reinstate the correct batting order.
- b) If the error is reported after the first illegal or legal pitch to the next batter or after the pitcher and all infielders clearly have vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory: (a) the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal; (b) all runs scored and bases run are legal; and (c) the next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player who batted out of order.

Notes:

- a) *No runner shall be removed from the base she is occupying to bat in her proper place except the batter who has been taken off the base by the plate umpire (as in the effect above). She merely misses her turn at bat*

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with no effect. The batter following her in the batting order becomes the legal batter.

- b) 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.*
- c) The announcer shall announce the players as listed on the line-up card. The public-address announcer; umpires or official scorer shall not call attention to the improper batter. If this occurs, the plate umpire shall warn the public-address announcer and/or the official scorer that on the next infraction, he/she will be removed from that position.*

10.12 Checked Swing

- 1) Regardless of whether or not the batter checked her swing, a pitched ball should be called a strike when it is in the strike zone.
- 2) A pitched ball should be called a ball when the plate umpire is blocked out or in doubt, regardless of whether or not the batter checked her swing.
- 3) When the catcher requests the home plate umpire to appeal to a base umpire regarding a checked swing, the appeal must be made.

Note: As a general rule, there are four factors when attempting to determine if a batter has swung at the ball or checked her swing:

- i) Did she roll her wrists?*
- ii) Was the bat out in front of her body?*
- iii) Did she swing through the ball and bring the bat back or draw the bat back before the pitch arrived?*
- iv) Did she make an attempt to hit/bunt/slap the pitch?*

10.13 Dropped Third Strike Rule

- 1) When with fewer than two outs and first base occupied, the catcher fails to catch a third strike before the ball touches the ground.

EFFECT: The batter is out. The ball is live. Base runners may advance with the liability of being put out.

- 2) When with two outs or fewer than two outs and first base is unoccupied, the catcher fails to catch a third strike before the ball touches the ground.

EFFECT: The ball is live. The batter becomes a batter-runner with the liability to be put out. Base runners may advance with liability to be put out.

10.14 Hitting Ball a Second Time

- 1) A batter may not, after contacting a fair ball, contact the ball with the bat a second time in fair territory.

EFFECT:

- a) If the bat is still in the batter's hand(s) when the ball is contacted a second time and the batter is out of the batter's box, the ball is dead,**

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the batter is out, and each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- b) If the bat is still in the batter's hand(s) when the ball is contacted a second time and the batter is within the batter's box, the ball is dead, a foul ball is ruled, and each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.
- c) If the bat is out of the batter's hand(s) (on the ground), the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intent to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is live. If it stops or is touched in fair territory, it is a fair ball. If the ball touches the bat in fair territory and then rolls to foul ground and stops, it is a foul ball. If the ball rolls against the bat in foul territory, it is a foul ball regardless.
- d) If the bat is out of the batter's hand(s) (thrown or dropped) and it hits the ball in fair territory, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.
- 2) The batter may not, after contacting a foul ball, intentionally deflect the course of the ball in any manner while running to first or intentionally interfere with the catcher's attempt to field a third strike.
- EFFECT: The batter is out. The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.**
- 3) The batter may not swing and miss a pitched ball and then accidentally hit it on the follow-through or after it bounces off the catcher or her mitt/glove.
- EFFECT: The pitch is a strike. The ball is dead. The batter is declared out if the pitch was a third strike; otherwise, she remains at bat. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.**
- 4) The batter may not swing and miss a pitched ball and then intentionally hit it on a second swing or after it bounces off the catcher or her mitt/glove.
- EFFECT: The batter is declared out. The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.**

10.15 Hit Batter (By Pitch)

- 1) A batter is awarded first base when a pitched ball neither swung at nor called a strike touches any part of the batter's person or clothing while she is in the batter's box.
- EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is entitled to first base without liability to be put out. Runners may not advance, unless forced.**

Notes:

- i) *The batter's hands are not considered part of the bat*

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ii) *It does not matter if the ball strikes the ground before hitting the batter.*

2) The hit batter shall not be awarded first base under the following circumstances:

- a) The batter obviously tried to get hit by the pitch or made no attempt to avoid the pitch.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The pitch is a ball or strike (depending on its location), and the batter remains at bat, except the batter is declared out if the pitch was a third strike or the batter is awarded first base if the pitch was “ball four”. Runners advance, if forced.

- b) The batter is hit by a pitch in the strike zone.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The pitch is a strike. The batter is declared out if the pitch is a third strike; otherwise, she remains at bat. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- c) The pitched ball touches any part of the batter’s person as she swings and misses for a third strike.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is declared out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- d) The batter is hit by a pitch out of the batter’s box, assuming she did not swing or attempt to bunt

EFFECT: “No Pitch”

- e) The pitcher shall not intentionally attempt to hit the batter with a pitch.

EFFECT: The umpire shall warn the pitcher and both opposing coaches that future violations by any pitcher will be cause for immediate ejection of the pitcher and the head coach. If the umpire determines intent, he may eject the pitcher and/or head coach without a warning.

10.16 Illegally Batted Ball

An illegally batted ball occurs when the batter contacts the pitch and:

- 1) Either one or both of the batter’s feet are in contact with the ground entirely outside the lines of the batter’s box.
- 2) Any part of the batter’s foot is touching home plate, even though she may be touching the lines of the batter’s box.

EFFECT: (10.16 / 1-2) The ball is dead. The batter shall be declared out. Each runner must return to base legally occupied at the time of the pitch, whether the ball is fair or foul.

Note: When batter’s boxes are not drawn, good judgment must be used and the benefit of the doubt must go to the batter.

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3) A non-approved or illegal bat is used.

EFFECT: The batter is out. Base runners shall not advance. The bat shall be removed from the game.

4) An altered bat is used.

EFFECT: The batter is out and ejected from the game. Base runners shall not advance. The bat shall be removed from the game.

10.17 Infield Fly Rule

The infield fly rule is in effect, when immediately declared by the umpire because the batter hits a fair ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when first and second base or all three bases are occupied, and there are fewer than two outs.

EFFECT: The ball is live. The batter-runner is out if the batted ball is fair.

Each runner may tag up and advance with the liability to be put out once the batted ball is touched (before it is caught), the same as on any caught fly ball. If a declared infield fly is dropped intentionally or allowed to fall untouched, the ball is live, and the batter-runner is out which removes all force plays, and each runner may advance with liability to be put out. A runner need not retouch her base(s).

Notes:

- i) If a declared infield fly becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.*
- ii) 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.*
- iii) The infield fly is ruled when the ball reaches its highest point based on the position of the closest infielder, regardless of who makes the play.*
- iv) If the ball is near the foul line, the umpire shall declare, "Infield fly, the batter is out if fair."*

10.18 Intentionally Dropped Fair Fly Ball

1) An intentionally dropped ball is a batted ball that is legally and actually caught and then deliberately dropped. A ball that is guided to the ground should not be considered an intentionally dropped ball. A ball that is trapped shall not be considered as having been intentionally dropped.

2) An infielder may not intentionally drop a fair fly ball, a line drive or a bunt when there are fewer than two outs and runners are on first; first and second; first and third; or first, second and third.

EFFECT: (10.18 / 1-2) The ball is dead. The batter is out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

Exception: The batter is not out if the infielder permits the ball in flight

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to drop untouched to the ground, except when the infield fly rule applies.

(See Rule 10.17) If an infield fly is ruled, it has precedence over an intentionally dropped ball.

10.19 Stepping Out of the Box

- 1) While the pitcher is in the pitching position, the batter shall not step from one batter's box to the other box.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 2) Unless permission is granted by the umpire, the batter shall not leave her position in the batter's box when the pitcher is in the pitching position on the pitcher's plate.

EFFECT: The batter leaves the batter's box at the risk of having a strike delivered, unless she requests and is granted "Time" from the plate umpire. If the plate umpire does not suspend play as requested by the batter and the pitcher legally delivers the pitch, it shall be called a strike or ball, depending upon the location of the pitch. The ball remains live.

- 3) Once the pitcher has taken the sign and started her wind up, she must deliver the pitch and the batter shall not leave her position in the batter's box.

EFFECT:

- i) **If the batter steps out of the box, holds up her hand or uses any other action as if requesting time and the pitcher legally delivers the pitch, it shall be called a strike or ball, depending upon the location of the pitch. The ball remains live.**
 - ii) **If the pitcher hesitates or stops in her delivery as a result of the batter stepping out of the box, holding up her hands or using any other action as if requesting time, it shall not be an illegal pitch. Since both the pitcher and the batter violated the rule, "No Pitch" shall be declared.**
 - iii) **If the umpire judges the batter's action to be a deliberate attempt to create an illegal pitch, the ball is dead, "No Pitch" is called, and all subsequent action on that pitch is canceled. A warning shall be issued to the batter and to the offending team. A repeat of this type of act by any member of the team warned shall result in the offender being ejected from the game.**
- 4) The batter shall not hinder the catcher or any other fielder from throwing or catching the ball by stepping out of the batter's box or intentionally hinder a player (steal/pick-off/play at the plate) while standing within the batter's box.

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EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out. Each runner must return to the last base that, in the umpire’s judgment, was legally touched at the time of the interference.

Exceptions:

- i) If the batter strikes out and interferes with the catcher’s attempt to throw out a runner, the runner also is out. The ball is dead.
- ii) If a runner is advancing to home plate and there are fewer than two outs, the runner, instead of the batter is out. The ball is dead.
- iii) If the catcher is not making a play on a base runner but the batter interferes with the catcher’s return throw to the pitcher and the runner advances safely, the umpire should call time and return the runner(s) to the base occupied at the time of the accidental interference.

10.20 Batter is Out

The batter is out when:

- 1) The on-deck batter or any other member of the team at bat interferes with a defensive player attempting to field a fly ball.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 2) The batter enters the batter’s box with or is using an altered bat.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is ejected. The bat shall be removed from the game. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 3) The batter enters the batter’s box with or using an illegal or non-approved bat.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. IFA batter enters the batter’s box with an illegal or non-approved bat, the bat shall be removed from the game (i.e., not returned to the dugout), the batter is out. Base runners shall not advance.

Exception: Advance is legal on a non-contacted pitch or ball four.

- 4) The offense bats out of order and the defense challenges the action after the incorrect batter has completed her turn at bat and before a legal or illegal pitch has been made to the following batter or before the pitcher and all infielders clearly have vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the incorrect batter or because of the incorrect batter’s advance to first base as a result of obstruction, a hit batter, a walk, an error, a dropped third strike or a base hit, shall be nullified. The next batter is

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the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat.

- 5) The batter's entire foot is touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box at the moment the bat-ball contact, whether fair or foul.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

Note: Where no batter's box lines are marked, good judgment must be used, and any doubt must go to the batter.

- 6) Any part of the batter's foot is touching home plate at the moment of bat-ball contact, whether the ball is fair or foul.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 7) The batter throws the whole bat into fair territory, whether intentionally or not, and it interferes with a defensive player attempting to make a play.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch. If, in the judgment of the umpire, interference prevented a possible double play, two runners may be declared out.

- 8) A batted ball hits the batter or hits the dirt or home plate and then hits the batter when the batter is out of the batter's box, and the batted ball is considered fair.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 9) The batter hits a fair ball with the bat a second time in fair territory.

EFFECT:

- i) **If the batter is out of the batter's box and the bat is still in the batter's hand(s) when the ball is contacted a second time, the ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch. Exception: If the batter is standing in the batter's box and contact is made while the bat is in the batter's hand(s), a foul ball is ruled even if the ball is hit a second time over fair territory.**
- ii) **If the bat is out of the batter's hand(s) (thrown or dropped) and it hits (lands on) the ball in fair territory, the ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.**

Note: If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and, in the judgment of the umpire, there was no intent to interfere with the course of the ball, the batter is not out, and the ball is live, in play, and ruled fair or foul depending on where it comes to rest or is first touched.

- 10) The batter swings and misses a pitched ball and then intentionally hits it on a second swing or after it bounces off the catcher or her mitt/glove.

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EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

11) The batter bunts foul after the second strike.

EFFECT: If the bunt attempt is caught in the air, the ball is live. Runners may tag and advance with liability to be put out.

If the bunt attempt results in a foul ball not legally caught, the ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

12) The batter's third strike is a foul tip.

EFFECT: The ball is live. Runners may advance without tagging but with liability to be put out.

13) A called or swinging third strike is legally caught by the catcher.

EFFECT: The ball is live. Runners may advance with liability to be put out.

14) The catcher fails to catch a third strike before the ball touches the ground when there are fewer than two outs, and first base is occupied.

EFFECT: The ball is live. Runners may advance with liability to be put out.

15) A pitched ball touches any part of the batter's person, including her hands, as she swings and misses for a third strike.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

16) The batter with two strikes, is hit by a pitch in the strike zone, makes no attempt to avoid a pitch in the strike zone or obviously tries to get hit by a pitch in the strike zone.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

17) The batter hinders the catcher or any fielder from catching or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter's box, or intentionally hinders a player (steal/pickoff throw or play at the plate) while standing within the batter's box.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the last base that, in the judgment of the umpire, was legally touched at the time of the interference.

Exceptions:

- i) The ball is dead. If the batter strikes out and interferes with the catcher's attempt to throw out a runner, the runner is also out.
- ii) The ball is dead. If a runner is advancing to home plate and there are fewer than two outs, the runner, instead of the batter is out.
- iii) If the catcher is not making a play on a base runner but the batter interferes with the catcher's return throw to the pitcher and the runner advances safely, the umpire should call time and return to

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the runner(s) to the base occupied at the time of the accidental interference.

- 18) The batter steps from one batter's box to the other while the pitcher is in the position ready to pitch.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

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11.00 Use of Double First Base

When using a double first base (white/orange) it is divided for safety purposes utilized by fielders/batter-runner(s). It is highly encouraged for the fielder to use the white base and the batter/runner to use the orange base on a routine play at first. During a play from foul territory on the “batter/runner” players may switch bases on the play. However, once the batter/runner reaches this base she will be considered a “runner only” and from that point on all other plays such as: errant throws, tag-ups, pick-offs and returns to first base will only allow players to use the white portion of the base.

- a) Using the foul line as a guide, a batted ball hitting the white portion of the base is declared fair and batted ball hitting the orange portion of the base is declared foul.

11.1 Batter Becomes a Batter-Runner

The batter becomes a batter-runner with liability to be put out:

- 1) When with two outs or fewer and first base is unoccupied, the catcher fails to catch a third strike before the ball touches the ground. (Rule 10.13)

Note: When the catcher fails to catch a third strike before the ball touches the ground with fewer than two outs and first base is occupied, the batter is automatically out; the ball is live; and each base runner may advance with liability to be put out.

- 2) After a legally batted fair ball that is not blocked.
- 3) When a fair batted ball strikes the person, clothing of a runner, attached equipment or an umpire after touching an infielder (including the pitcher).

Note: When said ball touches the runner/umpire while still in flight, it shall be considered a ground ball. It cannot be caught as a fly ball.

- 4) When a fair batted ball strikes the person, clothing of a runner, attached equipment or an umpire after passing a fielder (other than the pitcher), and no other infielder had a chance to make a play.
- EFFECT: (11.1 / 1-4) The ball is live. The batter becomes a batter-runner and advances with liability to be put out. Each base runner advances with liability to be put out, whether forced or not.**

11.2 Base Awards

- 1) **First Base:** The batter is awarded first base with no liability to be put out:

- a) After “ball four”

EFFECT: The ball is live unless blocked. The batter may advance beyond first base with liability to be put out. If forced, each base runner advances one base with no liability to be put out. If not forced, each base runner may advance with liability to be put out.

- b) After catcher obstruction (See Section 8.11)

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- c) After being hit by a pitch. (See Section 10.15)
- d) When a fair, untouched batted ball strikes a person, clothing of an umpire, attached equipment before touching a fielder (including the pitcher), or before passing a fielder (other than the pitcher).
- e) When a fair, untouched batted ball strikes a person, clothing of an umpire, attached equipment after passing an infielder (including the pitcher), but another fielder had a chance to make a play.

EFFECT: (11.2 / 1, d-e) The ball is dead, the batter is awarded first base and credited with a base hit. Each base runner, if forced, advances one base with no liability to be put out. If not forced, each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- f) When a runner intentionally kicks the ball that an infielder has missed.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base and the runner is out. Each other runner, if forced, advances one base with no liability to be put out. If not forced, each other runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- g) When a fair batted ball strikes the person, clothing of a runner or attached equipment before touching an infielder (including the pitcher) or passing an infielder (other than a pitcher) who has a reasonable chance to make a play.

- h) When a fair batted ball strikes the person, clothing of a runner or attached equipment after passing an infielder (including the pitcher), and another fielder had a chance to make a play.

EFFECT: (11.2 / 1, g-h)

- i) In general, the ball is dead, and the batter becomes a batter-runner and is awarded first base and credited with a base hit.
- ii) If off base when struck by a fair ball, the runner is out, and each runner not forced by the batter-runner must return to the base she legally touched at the time of the interference. If forced, each other runner advances one base without liability to be put out. The ball is dead.
- iii) If on base when struck by a fair ball, the runner is not out. The ball is live or dead, depending on the position of the fielder closest to the base. If the closest defensive player is in front of the base the runner is in contact with, the ball is live. If the closest defensive player is behind the base, the ball is dead. If forced, each runner advances one base with no liability to be put out. If unforced, each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

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2) **Second Base:** The batter is awarded second base with no liability to be put out:

- a) When a fair batted ball touches loose equipment belonging to the defense.
- b) When a fair batted ball bounces over, passes through or wedges under a fence or designated boundary of the playing field, or becomes blocked.
- c) When a fair batted ball lodges in the fence, or in vines or shrubbery on the fence.
- d) When a fair batted ball deflects off a defensive player and crosses into dead-ball territory (excluding a ball deflected over the home-run fence in fair territory), or passes an infielder (excluding the pitcher), deflects off a runner or umpire, and crosses into dead-ball territory, provided no other infielder has a reasonable chance to make a play.
- e) When a fair batted ball deflects off a fence and then off a fielder before going over the home-run fence.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is awarded second base and is credited with a two-base hit (double). Each other base runner is awarded two bases from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

3) **Third Base:** The batter is awarded third base with no liability to be put out:

- a) When a fielder intentionally catches or contacts a fair batted ball with her helmet, cap, chest protector, mask, mitt/glove or any part of her uniform that is detached from its proper place on her person.
- b) When an illegal touch or catch is made on a batted ball that, in the opinion of the umpire might become fair.

EFFECT: (11.2 / 3 a-b) Delayed dead ball is signaled. The batter is awarded third base and credited with a three-base hit (triple) but may advance farther with liability to be put out. Each other base runner is awarded home plate.

4) **Home Plate:** The batter is awarded home plate with no liability to be put out:

- a) When a fair batted fly ball strikes the foul pole above the fence level or leaves the playing field in fair territory without being caught, touching the ground or going through the fence even if the ball is deflected by a fielder.
- b) An illegal touch or catch is made on a fair hit ball that, in the umpire's judgment, would have cleared the home-run fence in flight.

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Note: The ball may have been prevented from going over the fence by a spectator or by detached player equipment which is thrown, kicked, tossed or held by a fielder.

EFFECT: (11.2 / 4 a-b) The ball is dead. The batter-runner is entitled to a home run, and each other base runner is awarded home plate.

5) **Judged Bases:** A batter, batter-runner or runner is entitled to advance the number of bases that the umpire judges to be appropriate:

a) When a fielder, not in possession of the ball, not in the act of fielding a batted ball or not about to receive a thrown ball, fakes a tag without the ball or otherwise impedes her.

EFFECT: (See Fielder Obstruction / Section 8.11 – 3)

b) When a spectator reaches out of the stands or enters the field and interferes with a play. The field belongs to the fielder and the stands belong to the spectator, except that the fielder may reach into the stands or over a fence to attempt to catch a batted fly ball.

EFFECT: (See Spectator Interference /Section 8.7)

c) When a fair batted ball becomes lodged in the clothing or attached equipment of an umpire or offensive player.

EFFECT: (See Equipment Blocked Ball / Section 7.3)

d) When an umpire suspends play to protect a player who was seriously injured.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter, batter-runner and base runners are awarded the appropriate bases.

6) **Two Bases:** When a fielder intentionally contacts or catches a thrown ball with her cap, mask, helmet, chest protector, mitt/glove or any part of her uniform that is detached from its proper place on her person.

EFFECT: Delayed dead ball is signaled. The batter-runner and each base runner are entitled to advance two bases from the time of the throw but may advance farther with liability to be put out.

11.3 Batter-Runner is Out

The batter-runner is out when:

1) She hits a fair ball and is legally put out before reaching first base.

EFFECT: The ball is live. Each runner may advance with liability to be put out, whether forced or not.

2) When she hits a foul or fair ball, other than a foul tip, and it is caught by a fielder before it touches the ground, any object or person other than a defensive player.

3) When she is legally put out before reaching first base when the catcher fails to catch a third strike before the ball touches the ground with two outs, or when there are fewer than two outs, and first base is unoccupied.

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Note: When the catcher fails to catch a third strike before the ball touches the ground with fewer than two outs and first base is occupied, the batter is automatically out.

EFFECT: (11.3 / 2-3) The ball is live. Each runner may advance with liability to be put out.

- 4) When she does not proceed to first base after a fair batted ball or a dropped third strike (with two outs, or when there are fewer than two outs and first base is unoccupied).

EFFECT: The ball is live. The batter-runner shall be declared out if she is touched while off base, the base is touched before she reaches it, or she leaves the field of play. Each runner may advance with liability to be put out.

- 5) When she does not proceed to first base after:

- a) A base on balls.

EFFECT: The ball is live. The batter-runner is out if and when she leaves the field of play. Each runner may advance with liability to be put out.

- b) Being hit by a pitch

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter-runner should proceed directly to first base; however, if she requires medical treatment, she may receive it before proceeding to first base. (The batter-runner is not out if she leaves the field for necessary medical treatment.) Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- c) Catcher obstruction

EFFECT: (See Catcher Obstruction / Section 8.11 / 1) Delayed dead ball is signaled. If the coach elects to take the result of enforced catcher obstruction, the batter-runner is awarded first base, and each runner may advance only if forced.

- 6) When, after reaching a base safely, a batter-runner or runner(s) abandons her base and obviously heads toward her position or the dugout (thinking she was put out) or leaves the field of play for any reason.

EFFECT: The ball is live. The batter-runner or runner(s) is out, and each other runner may advance with liability to be put out.

- 7) When she hits an infield fly, and the infield fly rule is in effect.

EFFECT: (See Infield Fly Rule, Section 10.17)

- 8) When either of her feet is completely outside the runner's lane, in contact with the ground, and, in the umpire's judgment, she interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base. **Exception:** She may run outside the runner's lane to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball and/or to touch the base on the last stride.

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EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

- 9) When with fewer than two outs and first, first and second, first and third, or first, second and third bases are occupied, an infielder intentionally drops a batted or bunted fair ball or line drive which could have been caught with ordinary effort.

Note: An intentionally dropped ball is a batted ball that is legally and actually caught and then deliberately dropped. A trapped ball shall not be considered as having been intentionally dropped. A ball that has been guided to the ground should not be considered an intentionally dropped ball.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch. Exception: The batter is not out when the infielder permits the ball in flight to drop untouched to the ground, except when the infield fly rule applies. If an infield fly is ruled, it takes precedence over an intentionally dropped ball.

- 10) When she runs the bases in reverse order to confuse opponents or to make a travesty of the game.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 11) When she steps back toward home plate to delay or avoid a tag by the fielder.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the pitch.

- 12) When she interferes with a play at home plate in an attempt to prevent an obvious out.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter and the runner at home are both declared out. Each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

- 13) When she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, interferes with a fielder attempting to throw the ball, intentionally interferes with a thrown ball while out of the batter's box, makes contact with a fair batted ball before reaching first base or interferes with a dropped third strike.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference. If the interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the runner being played on also shall be called out.

Note: A batter-runner being hit with a thrown ball does not necessarily constitute interference.

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- 14) When the immediate preceding runner who is not yet out intentionally interferes, in the judgment of the umpire, with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball in an attempt to complete a play.
EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter-runner and the runner are declared out. Each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.
- 15) When, after hitting a home run, providing her team previously was warned for a first offense, the individual is touched by any member of the offensive team other than the base coaches, before touching home plate.
EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is out and credited with the last base legally touched at the time of the interference. Each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.
- 16) When a spectator enters the field of play or reaches onto the field from the stands and clearly prevents a fielder from catching a fly ball in the field of play.
EFFECT: The ball is dead at the moment of the interference. The umpire shall award appropriate compensation, be it an out, extra bases, etc.
Note: It is not interference if the fielder reaches into the stands or over a fence and a spectator interferes with a possible catch. The field belongs to the fielder and the stands belong to the spectator.

BASERUNNER(S)

11.4 Base Runner May Advance With Liability to Be Put Out

- 1) A runner may advance with liability to be put out:
- When a pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
 - After a legally batted fair ball that is not blocked.
 - After a fair batted ball that strikes the person, attached equipment or clothing of a runner or an umpire after touching an infielder (including the pitcher)
 - After a fair batted ball that strikes the person, attached equipment or clothing of a runner or an umpire after passing an infielder (other than the pitcher), and no other infielder had a chance to make a play.
 - When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
 - When a pitched or thrown ball hits an umpire.
 - When a pitched or thrown ball enters foul territory but is not blocked.

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h) When a foul tip is legally caught.

Note: No tag-up is necessary.

i) When a runner is hit by a fair batted ball while in contact with a base, and the closest defensive player is in front of that base.

j) When a ball becomes lodged in a defensive player's uniform or equipment.

EFFECT: (11.4-1/ a-j) The ball is live.

11.5 Base Awards

An offensive player who is entitled to advance because of a base award is not in jeopardy of being put out. However, upon proper appeal by the defense, she may be called out for base running violations. In addition, to any special ground rules established, the following awards are in effect:

1) **One Base:** A base runner is entitled to advance one base with no liability to be put out:

a) If forced to vacate a base because of a one-base award to the batter.

EFFECT: The ball is live unless blocked. Each runner advances one base if forced and may advance farther with liability to be put out. If unforced, each runner may advance with liability to be put out.

b) When a pitcher makes an illegal pitch, provided the offensive coach does not take the result of the play.

EFFECT: Delayed dead ball is signaled. Each runner is awarded one base from the base occupied at the time of the pitch. The batter is awarded a ball. If the pitch is "Ball Four" or the batter is hit by the illegal pitch, the batter is awarded first base.

c) When a pitched ball is blocked (ex: lodges in or goes under, over or through the backstop).

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base only on the fourth ball. Each runner is awarded one base from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

d) When a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into dead-ball territory ("Catch and Carry").

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner is awarded one base from the last base legally touched at the time the fielder entered dead-ball territory.

e) When a fielder loses possession of the ball, such as on an attempted tag and the ball enters dead-ball territory or becomes blocked.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner is awarded one base from the last base legally touched at the time the ball became blocked.

2) **Two Bases:** A base runner is entitled to advance two bases with no liability to be put out:

a) If forced to vacate a base because of a two-base award to the batter.

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EFFECT: The ball is live unless blocked. Each runner advances two bases if forced and may advance farther with liability to be put out. If unforced, each runner may advance with liability to be put out.

- b) When a fair ball deflects off a defensive player and enters dead-ball territory.
- c) When a fair ball deflects off a runner or umpire and enters dead-ball territory after having passed an infielder (excluding the pitcher), provided no other infielder had a chance to make a play.

EFFECT: (11.5 / 2 b –c) The ball is dead. The batter-runner and each other runner are awarded two bases from the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

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

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner is awarded two bases from the last base legally touched when the ball left the fielder's hand. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.

Exceptions:

- i) When a fielder loses possession of the ball, such as on an attempted tag, and the ball enters dead-ball territory or becomes blocked, each runner is awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the ball became blocked.
Note: If a runner touches the next base and returns to her original base, the original base she left is considered the last base touched for the purpose of an overthrow award.
- ii) If the ball becomes blocked because of offensive equipment not involved in the game, the ball is ruled dead, and each runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the blocked ball. If the blocked ball prevented the defense from making a play, the runner being played on is called out. (If this player has scored before the blocked ball was ruled, the runner closest to home is called out.)
- e) If, in the umpire's judgment, a fielder intentionally kicks, carries, throws or pushes a live ball from playable territory into dead-ball territory.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. Each runner is awarded two bases from the last base legally touched at the time the ball enters dead-ball territory.

- 3) **Home Plate:** A base runner is entitled to advance to home plate with no liability to be put out if forced to vacate a base because of a three-or-four base award to the batter.

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- 4) **Judged Bases:** A batter, batter-runner or runner is entitled to advance the number of bases that the umpire judges to be appropriate:
- When a fielder not in possession of the ball, not in the act of fielding a batted ball or not about to receive a thrown ball, fakes a tag without the ball or impedes her.
EFFECT: (See Fake Tag Rule, Fielder Obstruction, 8.11/3)
Notes:
 - Base runner(s) may advance farther with liability to be put out.*
 - An obstructed runner may not be called out between the two bases where she was obstructed unless properly appealed for missing a base, for an act of interference or for leaving a base before a fly ball was first touched.*
 - When a spectator reaches out of the stands or enters the field of play and interferes with the play.
EFFECT: The ball is dead. The umpire shall award appropriate compensation, be it an out, extra bases, etc.
Note: It is not interference if the fielder reaches into the stands or over a fence and a spectator interferes with a possible catch. The field belongs to the fielder, and the stands belong to the spectator.
 - When an umpire suspends play to protect a player who was seriously injured.
EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter, batter-runner and base runners are awarded the appropriate bases.

11.6 Base Runner Forfeits Exemption from Liability to Be Put Out

A base runner forfeits exemption from liability to be out:

- If, after making the turn at or overrunning first base, the batter-runner feints or attempts to continue to second base.
- If, after dislodging a base, the runner attempts to reach the next base.
- If, while the ball is in play or on awarded bases, the runner fails to touch a base before attempting to make the next base. If the runner put out is the batter-runner at first base, or any other runner forced to advance because the batter became a batter-runner, this is a force out. A runner may not return to touch a missed base or one left too soon on a caught fly ball, if she is standing on a base beyond the base she missed or left too soon when "Time" has been called.
- If the ball is live and a runner, after reaching an awarded base, attempts to advance farther.

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- 5) If the ball is live and a runner, after reaching base safely, abandons her base (ex., heads towards her position or the dugout, because thinking she/other were put out to end the inning).

11.7 Base Runner is Out

The base runner is out:

- 1) When on a force play, a fielder:
 - a) Contacts the base while holding the ball;
 - b) Touches the ball to the base; or
 - c) Tags the runner before she reaches the base.
- 2) If the ball is in play and she is not in contact with a base when she is legally touched by the ball securely held in the hand(s) or mitt/glove of a fielder.

Exceptions:

- i) When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither she nor the succeeding runner(s) in the same series of plays is compelled to follow the base out of position. The base is considered to have followed the runner, and the ball is live. The runner may stay where she is without liability to be put out, or she may attempt to advance farther with liability to be put out. Other runners may advance with liability to be put out.
 - ii) When a runner reaches a base safely, but the tag is applied with excessive force which causes the runner to lose contact with the base.
 - iii) A batter-runner who reaches first base safely and then overruns or over slides may immediately return without liability to be put out, provided she does not feint or attempt to advance to second.
- 3) When she physically passes (ex. completely overtakes) a preceding runner before that runner has been put out, unless the passed runner was obstructed.

Note: If this was the third out of the inning, any runs scoring before the out for passing a preceding runner would count. Runners are returned to the proper order as soon as the ball is declared dead.

***With fewer than two outs, if a batter, while running the bases after a home run outside the playing field, passes a preceding runner; the batter is out, but all preceding runners score. With two outs, only those preceding runners score who have touched the plate before the batter is declared out. This is a timing play, not an appeal play.*

- 4) When anyone other than another runner physically assists player while the ball is in play.
- 5) When, after play has resumed, the player fails to return to touch the base they previously occupied, and the defensive team makes a proper appeal.

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- 6) When she is running to any base in regular or reverse order, and she attempts to avoid or delay a tag by running out of the base path.

EFFECT: (11.7 / 1-6) The ball is live. Each other runner may advance with liability to be put out.

Exception: It is not an infraction if a fielder is attempting to field a batted ball in the runner's proper path, and the runner runs in front of or behind the fielder to avoid interfering with her.

- 7) When she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, interferes with a fielder attempting to throw the ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.

EFFECT:

- i) **The ball is dead. The batter-runner is awarded first base and credited with a base hit. Each runner not forced by the batter-runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.**
- ii) **If the interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play and occurs before the runner is put out, the runner being played on shall also be called out.**

Notes:

- (a) *If a ball ricochets off one defensive player and another player has the opportunity to make a play, the runner will be ruled out if she intentionally interferes with the second fielder.*
 - (b) *If two fielders attempt to field a batted ball, the umpire shall determine which fielder is more likely to make the play, and only that fielder is protected from interference by the runner. The runner is not out when more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball, and the runner comes into contact with the one who, in the umpire's judgment, could not have made a play.*
- 8) When she is struck with a fair batted ball while not in contact with a base and before it passes an infielder, excluding the pitcher, who has a reasonable chance to make a play.

EFFECT:

- i) **The ball is dead. The batter-runner is awarded first base and credited with a base hit. Each runner not forced by the batter-runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.**
 - ii) **If two runners are hit by the same fair ball, only the first runner is out. If the runner is off a base and hit by an infield fly, both the runner and the batter is out. If the runner is touching a base when hit by an infield fly, she is not out.**
- 9) When a player is struck by a batted ball while in contact with a base, or otherwise interferes with the fielder attempting to field a batted ball, they

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are not out unless the umpire rules intentional interference with the ball or the fielder making a play.

EFFECT: If the umpire rules intentional interference, the ball is dead, and the batter is out if there are two outs. If there are fewer than two outs, both the batter and the runner are out. Each other runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

10) When a player intentionally kicks a ball that an infielder has missed.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter-runner is awarded first base and credited with a base hit. Each runner not forced by the batter-runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

11) When, after being declared out or after scoring, a runner interferes with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner.

12) When a coach, while in the coach's box, intentionally interferes with a thrown ball or interferes with the defensive team's opportunity to make a play on another runner.

Note: If a thrown ball accidentally touches a coach in foul territory, the ball is live and in play.

13) When the coach near third 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 draws a throw to home plate.

EFFECT: (11.7 / 11-13) The ball is dead. The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out. Each runner not forced by the batter-runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

14) When a defensive player has the ball, the runner remains on her feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player.

Note: If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall also be ejected.

15) When one or more members of the offensive team stand or collect around a base to which a runner is advancing, confusing the fielders and adding to the difficulty of making the play.

Note: Members of a team include all persons authorized to be in the team's dugout.

EFFECT: (11.7 / 14-15) The ball is dead. Each runner not forced by the batter-runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

16) When she leaves the base, she is occupying before the pitch is released.

17) When she is legitimately off her base after a pitch or as a result of a batter completing her turn at bat, and while the pitcher has the ball within the

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- 18) pitcher's circle, she fails to immediately return to her base or attempt to advance to the next base.
- 19) When, once she returns to a base for any reason, she leaves the base, unless:
 - a) A play is made on her or another runner
 - b) The pitcher no longer has possession of the ball within the pitcher's circle; or
 - c) The pitcher releases the ball on a pitch to the batter.

EFFECT: (11.7 / 16-18) The ball is dead, "No Pitch" is declared, and each other runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 19) When after reaching a base safely, she abandons her base and obviously heads toward her position or the dugout, believing she was put out or that another runner or the batter-runner was put out to the end of the inning.
- 20) When she used a running start (from a position behind and not in contact with the base) to tag up on a caught fly ball.

EFFECT: (11.7 / 19-20) The ball is live. Base runners may advance with liability to be put out.

11.8 Base Runner is Out After a Proper Appeal

The base runner is out after a proper appeal:

- 1) When she fails to touch each base (including home plate) in order when advancing or returning to a base. Either the runner or the missed base may be tagged.

Note: No runner may return to touch a missed base after a trailing runner has scored or after leaving the field of play.

- 2) When she fails to retouch her base before a fielder tags her or the base, after a foul or fair fly ball is legally caught.
- 3) When she leaves her base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball first touches the fielder. Either the runner or the base may be tagged.

Notes:

a) Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched before advancing to awarded bases.

b) No runner may return to touch a base which she left too soon if she has left the field of play or if a trailing runner has scored.

- 4) When she legally overruns first base, attempts to run to second base and is legally tagged while off the base.
- 5) When, after a conference, base runners switch positions on the bases they occupied, the ball has been put back in play, and before the end of the half-inning.

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- 6) When she is running or sliding for home plate, fails to touch it and makes no attempt to return to it, and a fielder (while touching the plate) properly appeals to the umpire for the decision.

11.9 Base Runner is Not Out

The base runner is not out:

- 1) When she is hit with a fair batted ball over foul territory, and, in the umpire's judgment, no infielder had a reasonable chance to make a play.
- 2) When she is hit with a fair, batted ball that has passed an infielder (excluding the pitcher), and, in the umpire's judgment, no other fielder had a reasonable chance to make a play.
- 3) When she is hit by a fair batted ball after it touches or is touched by any fielder (including the pitcher), and she could not avoid contact with the ball.
- 4) When she is hit by a batted ball while touching her base, unless she intentionally interferes with the ball or a fielder making a play.
- 5) When a batter-runner overruns first base after touching it and returns directly to the base.
- 6) When she fails to return to a base at the end of playing action because she is not given sufficient time. She will not be called out for being off base before the pitcher releases the ball. "No Pitch" will be called by the umpire.
- 7) When she keeps contact with her base until a fly ball touches a fielder and then attempts to advance.
- 8) When she has legally started to advance. She may not be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitching plate, nor by the pitcher stepping on the plate with the ball in her possession.
- 9) When she does not run in a direct line to a base, provided a fielder in the direct line does not have the ball in her possession.
- 10) When she runs behind or in front of the fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.
- 11) When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball, and the runner comes into contact with the one who, in the umpire's judgment, could not have made a play.
- 12) When she slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper position. The base is considered to have followed the runner.
- 13) When she is touched while off a base:
 - a) With a ball not securely held by a fielder.
 - b) With a hand or mitt/glove of a defensive player when the ball is in the player's other hand.
- 14) When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the next legal or illegal pitch, or until after the

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- 15) pitcher and all infielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory.
- 16) When a fielder makes a play on a batter, batter-runner or runner while using an illegal mitt/glove.

REGULATIONS GOVERNING BASE RUNNING

11.10 Abandoning a Base or Effort to Run the Bases

- 1) Not proceeding to first base after a fair batted ball or a dropped third strike (with two outs, or when there are fewer than two outs and first base is occupied).

EFFECT: The ball is live. The batter-runner shall be declared out if she is touched while off base, the base is touched before she reaches it, or she leaves the field of play. Each runner may advance with liability to be put out.

- 2) Not proceeding to first base after a base on balls.

EFFECT: The ball is live. The batter-runner is out if and when she leaves the field of play. Each runner may advance with liability to be put out.

- 3) Not proceeding to first base after being hit by a pitch.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter-runner should proceed directly to first base; however, if she requires medical treatment, she may receive it before proceeding to first base. (The batter-runner is not out if she leaves the field for necessary medical treatment.) Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch, unless forced.

- 4) Not proceeding to first base after catcher obstruction.

EFFECT: Delayed dead ball is signaled.

- i) If the coach elects to take the result of the play, the batter-runner is out if and when she leaves the field of play, and each runner may advance with liability to be put out.
- ii) If the coach elects to take the result of enforced catcher obstruction, the batter-runner is awarded first base, and each runner may advance only if forced.

- 5) After reaching a base safely, obviously heading toward her position or the dugout (believing she was put out, the batted ball was foul, etc.), or leaving the field of play for any reason.

EFFECT: The ball is live. The batter-runner or runner(s) is out. Each other runner may advance with liability to be put out.

11.11 Catch and Carry

A fielder may not catch of field a live ball and carry it into dead-ball territory. This is commonly referred to as a "catch and carry".

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EFFECT:

- i) The ball is dead. The batter and each runner are awarded one base, without liability to be put out, from the last base legally touched at the time the fielder entered dead-ball territory. Exception: If the ball is legally caught fly ball, the batter is out.
- ii) If, in the umpire's judgment, a fielder intentionally carries, kicks, pushes, pitches or throws a live ball from playable territory into dead-ball territory, the ball is dead, and each runner is awarded two bases from the last base legally touched at the time the ball entered dead-ball territory.

Notes:

- (a) *When a line is used to determine dead-ball (out-of-play) territory, the line is considered in play.*
- (b) *If a fielder's foot is touching the line or is in live-ball territory, she is considered in the field of play and legally may field, catch or throw the ball with no effect.*
- (c) *If a player's entire foot is beyond the line and touching dead-ball territory at the time she catches, fields or throws the ball, she has entered dead-ball territory, the ball is dead, and no play is allowed.*
- (d) *If a player has one foot in play and the other foot in the air, she legally may catch, field or throw the ball until and unless her entire foot contacts the ground in dead-ball territory, at which time the ball becomes dead and no play is allowed.*
- (e) *If a player contacts dead-ball territory with any part of the body, including the entire foot, she is considered out of play. No play is allowed.*

11.12 Collisions

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

Note: If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender will be ejected.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The runner is called out for deliberately crashing into a fielder, even if the ball is dislodged. If the runner deliberately crashed into a fielder holding the ball before she was put out and, in the umpire's judgment, it was an attempt to break up an obvious

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double play, the offender and player being played on shall both be declared out. If the deliberate crash occurs after the runner was called out, the runner closest to home plate will be declared out. If an obstructed runner deliberately crashes into a fielder holding the ball, the obstruction call will be ignored, and the runner will be called out.

- 2) Simply because there is contact between the defensive and offensive player does not mean that obstruction or interference has occurred.

11.13 Dislodged Base

- 1) When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither she nor the trailing runner(s) in the same series of plays is compelled to follow the base out of position. The base is considered to have followed the runner.

EFFECT: The ball is live. The runner may stay where she is without liability to be put out, or she may attempt to advance farther with liability to be put out. Each other runner may advance with liability to be put out.

- 2) Each runner who attempts to advance to or past the dislodged base must touch the spot where the base belongs.
- 3) At the conclusion of play, "Timeout/Time" shall be called, and the dislodged base shall be returned to its proper position.

11.14 Fake Tag

A fake tag occurs when a fielder who neither possesses the ball nor is about to receive the ball, obstructs a runner by pretending to have the ball and simulating a tag, which causes the runner to slow down or stop. A fielder may not fake a tag on a runner advancing or returning to a base.

EFFECT: Delayed dead ball is signaled. If the obstructed batter, batter-runner or runner is put out before reaching the base she would have reached had there not been obstruction, the obstructed player and each other runner affected by the obstruction will be awarded the base(s) she would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, had there been no obstruction. Subsequent violation by the same individual may result in a one-base award to the obstructed player and each other runner forced to advance.

11.15 Hit by a Batted Ball

A base runner or umpire is considered hit by a batted ball when the ball contacts his/her person, attached equipment or clothing:

- 1) When a runner not in contact with a base or umpire is struck by a fair batted ball after it has passed an infielder (other than the pitcher), and, in the umpire's judgment, no other fielder had a reasonable chance to make a play.

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- 2) When a runner not in contact with a base or umpire is unavoidably struck by a fair batted ball after it touches or is touched by a fielder (including the pitcher), and no other fielder had a reasonable chance to make a play.

EFFECT: (11.15/ 1-2) The ball is live. The batter becomes a batter-runner and advances with liability to be put out. Each runner may advance with liability to be put out, whether forced or not.

Note: When said ball touches the runner/umpire while still in flight, it shall be considered a ground ball. It cannot be caught as a fly ball.

- 3) When a runner is struck by a fair batted ball while in contact with a base, she is not out unless she intentionally interferes with the ball or the fielder making a play. The ball is live or dead, depending on the position of the fielder closest to the ball.

EFFECT:

- i) **If the closest defensive player is in front of the base the runner is in contact with, the ball is live. The batter-runner and each other runner may advance with liability to be put out.**
 - ii) **If the closest defensive player is behind the base the runner is in contact with, the ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base, credited with a base hit, and each other runner not forced by the batter-runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.**
 - iii) **If the umpire rules intentional interference, the ball is dead, and the batter is out if there are two outs. If there are fewer than two outs, both the batter and the runner are out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the interference.**
- 4) When a runner is struck by a fair batted ball while not in contact with a base and:
- a) Before the ball touches an infielder, including the pitcher;
 - b) Before the ball passes an infielder, excluding the pitcher, who has a reasonable chance to make a play; or
 - c) After passing an infielder, including the pitcher, and another fielder had a reasonable chance to make a play.

EFFECT: Runner interference.

- i) **The ball is dead, and the runner is out. The batter-runner is awarded first base and credited with a base hit. Each runner not forced by the batter-runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.**
- ii) **If two runners are hit by the same fair batted ball, only the first runner is out.**

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iii) If the runner is off a base and is hit by an infield fly, both the runner and the batter are out. If the runner is touching a base when struck by an infield fly, she is not out.

5) When a runner intentionally kicks a ball that an infielder has missed.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The runner is out. The batter-runner is awarded first base and credited with a base hit. Each runner not forced by the batter-runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

6) When a runner is struck by a fair batted ball over foul territory and, in the umpire's judgment, no infielder had a reasonable chance to make a play.

EFFECT: The ball is live and in play. The runner who was struck and each other runner may advance with liability to be put out.

11.16 Illegal Mitt/Glove Used to Make a Play on Batter, Batter-Runner or Runner

A fielder shall not make a play on a batter, batter-runner or runner while using an illegal glove or mitt.

EFFECT: The coach of the offended team shall have the option to:

i) Nullify the entire play.

(1) The batter assumes the ball and strike count she had before the pitch and continues her turn at bat

(2) Each runner returns to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

ii) Take the result of the play and disregard the illegal act.

iii) If the illegal catch or touch is made on a fair batted fly ball that, in the umpire's judgment, would have cleared the home-run fence, the batter-runner is entitled to a home-run, and each other base runner is awarded home plate. The ball may have been prevented from going over the fence by a spectator or by detached player equipment which is thrown, tossed, kicked or held by a fielder:

Note: If the illegal mitt/glove does not meet specifications (Section 3.6), it shall be removed from the game (Not the dugout).

11.17 Leading Off Base

Once a runner returns to a base for any reason, she may not leave the base unless (a) a play is made on her or another runner, (b) the pitcher does not have possession of the ball within the pitcher's circle, or (c) the pitcher releases the pitch to the batter. A base runner must be in contact with her base at the time a pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand. Exception: When the pitcher does not allow sufficient time for a runner to return to a base, the runner shall not be called out for being off the base before the pitcher releases the pitch.

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EFFECT: The ball is dead. “No Pitch” is called. The offending base runner(s) is out. Each other base runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

11.18 Look-Back Rule

- 1) The look-back rule is in effect when the ball is live, the batter-runner has touched first base, there are one or more runners, and the pitcher has possession (ex., has ball in her glove or hand, under chin or arm, between her legs) and control of the ball within the pitcher’s circle. The pitcher is considered to be in the pitcher’s circle when both her feet are within the circle or on the lines.
- 2) When a runner is legally off her base after a pitch or as a result of a batter completing her turn at bat, and she is in motion as the pitcher takes possession of the ball within the pitcher’s circle, the runner may continue moving forward in the direction she is going without stopping; or she may immediately and directly go back in the other direction. If the runner is stopped as the pitcher takes possession of the ball within the pitcher’s circle, the runner must immediately and directly go forward or back. A base on balls or a dropped third strike is treated as a base hit as long as the batter-runner continues past first base.
- 3) Once the runner has determined a direction, she may not reverse direction unless the pitcher:
 - a) Throws the ball from within the pitcher’s circle
 - b) Carries the ball outside the pitcher’s circle.
 - c) Has one foot completely outside the pitcher’s circle, on the ground, and is in possession of the ball.
 - d) Sets the ball on the ground or no longer has the ball in her possession.
 - e) Loses possession of the ball, including handing it to another player.
 - f) Makes a play on the runner or another runner.

Note: When the pitcher’s circle is not visible, the umpire must use good judgment.
- 4) The pitcher is considered to have made a play if:
 - a) She fakes a throw.

Note: Raising the throwing arm into throwing position is considered a fake throw regardless of whether the pitcher’s arm moves forward.
- 5) There is no obligation on the part of the pitcher to look, fake or throw in order to force the runner to comply with the look-back rule. The obligation to comply rests solely with the runner.
- 6) When the pitcher takes possession of the ball within the pitcher’s circle:
 - a) A runner standing off her base must immediately return to the base she last occupied or advance to the next base.
 - b)

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- c) A runner who starts back to the base she last occupied or starts forward toward the next base shall not stop or reverse direction.
- d) The batter-runner may not step off any base after stopping at it.
- e) The batter-runner, after overrunning first base, may not retouch the base and advance toward second base.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The offending runner is out. Each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the infraction. If two runners are of base and the umpires call different runners out, the umpires must determine which runner was called out first, as it is not possible to obtain more than one out under the look-back rule. The ball is dead when the first runner is called out, and the other runner must return to the base last touched at the time of the infraction.

- 7) The batter-runner may overrun first base, not stop and continue advancing toward second base after the pitcher has the ball within the pitcher's circle. This is a legal move, as long as the runner does not return and touch first base on their way to second. When the runner has legally started towards second, they may be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while in the pitcher's circle or by the pitcher stepping on the pitcher's plate with the ball in possession.

11.19 Missing a Base

- 1) A runner must touch each base in order when she is advancing or returning to a base and the ball is in play. Missing a base is an appeal play. The umpire does not make a ruling on an appeal play until asked to do so by a coach or player.
- 2) A runner is assumed safe until put out. If a proper appeal is not made, the runner is safe.
 - a) If a runner misses home plate and the fielder misses or makes no attempt to tag the runner, the umpire should make a safe signal and declare, "No Tag". If an appeal play is made (ex. by tagging either the runner or home plate), the umpire should then make a decision on the appeal.
 - b) If a runner passes first base before the throw arrives, she is considered to have touched the base unless an appeal play is made.
- 3) An appeal must be honored even if the base missed was before or after an award.
- 4) A runner who must return to a base while the ball is in play or dead must retouch the base(s) in reverse order. Exception: A runner, who must return to a base after an uncaught foul ball, need not touch intervening bases.
- 5) A runner may not return to touch a missed base if:

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- a) She has left the field of play;
- b) A trailing runner has scored;
- c) She is standing on a base beyond the base she missed, and “Time” has been called by the umpire;
- d) The ball becomes dead; or
- e) On a dead ball base award, she has touched the final base of the base award.

Note: If the runner is between any two bases and is attempting to return to the base missed, she can continue.

- 6) The failure of a preceding runner to touch a base (and who is declared out) does not affect the status of a trailing runner who touches each base in proper order. However, after two are out, a trailing runner cannot score a run when a preceding runner is declared out for failing to touch a base in regular order.
- 7) Any runner who misses the first base to which she is advancing and who is later called out, shall be considered as having advanced one base.

11.20 Occupying Bases

- 1) A runner or batter-runner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out and is entitled to hold the base until she has legally touched the next base in order or is forced to vacate it for a trailing runner.
- 2) Two runners may not occupy the same base simultaneously. The runner who first legally occupied the base is entitled to it, unless forced to advance. The other runner may be put out by being touched with the ball or mitt/glove holding the ball.

Note: If a runner is being run down between bases and the trailing runner occupies the same base the first runner has left, the second runner cannot be put out while occupying said base. If the first runner, however, returns safely to the base she left and both runners then are occupying the same base, the second runner is out if touched with the ball.

- 3) A runner who is touching a base when “Timeout/Time” is called, may not advance nor return during the suspension of play.

11.21 Overrunning or Over-sliding Bases

- 1) A batter-runner, who touches first base safely and then over-slides or overruns it, may immediately return to first without liability to be put out. The batter-runner may legally turn either direction when returning first base. If, however, the runner makes an attempt or feints to advance to second, regardless of whether in foul or fair territory, may be tagged out (while off the base) with the ball. This is an appeal play.

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- 2) A batter-runner or runner may round a base and go directly to the next base without stopping. If, however, she stops after rounding a base, and the
- 3) Pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitcher's circle, she must comply with the look-back rule. (Rule 11.17)

Note: A batter, who is entitled to advance after a walk or dropped third strike, is treated the same as if she batted the ball.

- 4) A runner may overrun or over-slide home plate after legally touching it without liability to be put out.

11.22 Running Out of the Base Line or Out of the Runner's Lane

- 1) The conventional path traveled by a runner, who is attempting to advance to the next base, is defined by the imaginary direct line, and three feet to either side of the line, between a base and a runner's position at the time a defensive player is attempting to apply a tag.

EFFECT: The ball is live. The offending runner is out, but each other runner may continue to advance with liability to be put out.

Exceptions:

- i) A runner is not out when she runs behind or in front of a fielder and outside the base line in order to avoid interfering with the fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.
 - ii) The runner is not out when she fails to run in a direct line to a base, provided the fielder in the direct line does not have the ball in her possession.
- 2) The batter-runner shall not run outside the runner's lane and, in the umpire's judgment, interfere with the fielder taking the throw at first base. This is an interference violation.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The offending runner is out. Each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

Exceptions:

- i) The batter-runner may run outside the runner's lane to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
- ii) The batter runner may run outside the runner's lane to touch the base on the last stride.
- iii) The infraction is ignored if the act does not interfere with the fielder taking the throw at first base.

Notes:

- a) *The batter-runner is considered outside the runner's lane if either foot is in contact with the ground and is completely outside either line.*
- b) *A batter-runner being hit with a thrown ball does not necessarily constitute interference.*

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11.23 Tag and Force Plays

- 1) A batter-runner or runner is considered tagged out if the ball is in play and she is not in contact with a base when she is legally touched by the ball securely held in the hand(s) or mitt/glove of a fielder. It is sufficient for the runner to be touched with the hand(s) or mitt/glove holding the ball.

Exceptions:

- (a) A batter-runner who reaches first base safely and then overruns or over-slides it, may immediately return without liability to be put out provided she does not feint or attempt to advance to second.
 - (b) When a runner passes first base before the throw arrives, she is considered to have touched the base unless an appeal play is made.
 - (c) When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither she nor the trailing runner(s) in the same series of plays is compelled to follow the base out of position. The base is considered to have followed the runner, and the ball is live. The runner may stay where she is without liability to be put out, or she may attempt to advance farther with liability to be put out. Each other runner may advance with liability to be put out.
- 2) A batter-runner is out when she legally overruns first base, attempts to run to second base and is legally tagged while off base.
 - 3) A batter runner or runner is considered forced out if she must advance to the next base or to home plate in order to make room for another base runner but:
 - a) She is legally tagged before she reaches the forced base.
 - b) The fielder, while holding the ball, contacts the base in advance of the batter-runner or runner.
 - c) The fielder touches the ball to the forced base in advance of the batter-runner or runner.
 - 4) The runner is out if she is off base when a foul or fair fly ball is legally caught, and she fails to retouch the base (occupied at the time of the pitch) before a fielder tags her or the base.
 - 5) If an appeal is upheld at a base to which a runner was forced to advance, and the out is a force out, no runs would score if it was the third out. If a forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason toward the base she had last occupied, the force play is reinstated, and she may again be put out if the defense tags the base to which she is forced.
 - 6) It is still a force out when a runner misses a base to which she is forced to advance and is subsequently appealed after the batter-runner or a trailing runner has been retired.

Note: *There cannot be a force out if the batter does not become a batter-runner.*

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- 7) The batter-runner or runner is not out:
- When touched while off a base with a ball not securely held by a fielder.
- Note: The ball is not considered securely held if it is juggled or dropped after the touch unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand(s) / mitt/glove of the fielder.*
- When touched while off a base with a fielder's hand or mitt/glove when the ball is in the fielder's other hand.
 - When played on by a fielder using an illegal mitt/glove.
 - When an improper live-ball appeal is made. (See Appeals Rule 5.1 / 5)

11.24 Tagging Up after a Caught Fly Ball

- The initial contact of the ball by a fielder releases the runner(s) from the base(s) occupied at the time of the pitch. A base runner is out if she leaves her base too soon. Either the runner or the base (left too soon) may be tagged. This is an appeal play.
 - An appeal must be upheld even if the base left too soon was before or after an award. Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched before advancing to awarded bases.
 - A runner who must return to a base while the ball is in play or dead must retouch the base(s) in reverse order.
Exception: A runner, who must return to a base after an uncaught foul ball, need not touch intervening bases.
 - A runner may not return to touch a base left too soon on a caught fly ball if:
 - She has left the field of play;
 - A trailing runner has scored;
 - She is standing on a base beyond the base she left too soon, and "Timeout/Time" has been called by the umpire, or
 - The ball becomes dead.
- Note: If the runner is between any two bases and attempting to return to the base left too soon, she can continue.*
- The failure of a preceding runner to legally tag up on a caught fly ball (and who is declared out) does not affect the status of a trailing runner who touches each base in proper order. However, after two are out, a trailing runner cannot score a run when a preceding runner is declared out for failing to legally tag up on a caught fly ball.
 - If a runner leaves a base too soon on a caught fly ball and returns in an attempt to retag, this is considered a timing play and not a force out. If the appeal is the third out, all runs scored by runners in advance of the appealed runner and scored ahead of the legal appeal would count.

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7) A runner may not use a running start from a position behind and not in contact with a base.

EFFECT: The ball is live and the offending base runner(s) is out. Each other base runner(s) may advance with liability to be put out.

11.25 Touching the Bases

1) An advancing runner must touch each base in legal order. All awarded bases must also be touched, and in legal order.

Note: Obstructed runner(s) are still required to touch all bases in legal order, or they could be called out on a proper appeal by the defensive team.

2) Bases missed or left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched before advancing. However, no runner may return to touch a missed base or one she has left too soon on a caught fly ball.

- a) Once she has left the field of play;
- b) Once a trailing runner has scored;
- c) When she is standing on a base beyond the base she left too soon, and “Timeout/Time” has been called by the umpire;
- d) When the ball becomes dead; or
- e) On a dead-ball base award, she has touched the final base of the base award.

Note: If the runner is between any two bases and attempting to return to the base left too soon, she can continue.

3) A runner who must return to a base while the ball is in play or dead must retouch the base(s) in reverse order. Exception: A runner, who must return to a base after an uncaught foul ball, need not touch intervening bases.

EFFECT: (11.25 / 1-3) For failure to touch a base when advancing or returning while the ball is in play, the runner is out if, before she reaches each untouched base, she is legally tagged. If the base is one to which the runner is forced, she is out when tagged or if the ball is held by a fielder on the base she failed to touch (including home plate).

Notes:

- i) *When a runner does not touch home plate and does not make an attempt to touch it, the fielder may touch either the runner or home plate. When a runner misses home plate and the fielder misses or makes no attempt to tag the runner, the umpire should make a safe signal and declare “No Tag”. When a proper appeal play is made, the umpire should then make a decision on the appeal.*
- ii) *When a runner is legally returning to tag up after a caught fly ball, the runner can be put out by being tagged, or by the defense touching the base the runner occupied at the time of the pitch. Each other runner may advance or return with liability to be put out.*

SECTION 11 – BASE RUNNING

- 4) A runner shall not run bases in reverse order either to confuse the fielder or to make a travesty of the game.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The runner is out. Each other runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 5) The batter-runner may not step back toward home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder.

EFFECT: The ball is dead. The batter-runner is out. Each runner must return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.

- 6) The failure of a preceding runner to touch or retouch a base or to legally tag up on a caught fly ball (and who is declared out) does not affect the status of a trailing runner who touches each base in proper order. However, after two are out, a trailing runner cannot score a run when a preceding runner is declared out for failing to touch a base in regular order or to legally tag up on a caught fly ball.

- 7) When a runner has legally started to advance, she may not be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitcher's plate or by the pitcher stepping on the plate with the ball in her possession.

- 8) When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither she nor the trailing runner(s) in the same series of plays is compelled to follow the base out of position. The base is considered to have followed the runner.

EFFECT: The ball is live. The runner may stay where she is without liability to be put out, or she may attempt to advance with liability to be put out. Each other runner may advance with liability to be put out. Each runner who attempts to advance to or past the dislodged base must touch the spot where the base belongs. At the conclusion of play, "Timeout/Time" shall be called, and the dislodged base shall be returned to its proper position.

- 9) When a runner or batter-runner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out, she is entitled to hold the base until she has legally touched the next base in order or is forced to vacate it for a trailing runner. Two runners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.

EFFECT: The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to it, unless forced to advance. The other runner may be put out by being touched with the ball securely held in the hand(s) or mitt/glove of the fielder. For example, if a runner is being run down between bases and the trailing runner occupies the same base the first runner has left, the second runner cannot be put out while occupying said base. If the first runner returns safely to the base she has left and both runners are then occupying the same base, the second runner is out, if touched with the ball securely held in the hand(s) or mitt/glove of a fielder.

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10) Between pitches and after a dead ball, each runner must return to her base. The pitcher is obligated to allow sufficient time for the runner to return to her base, and the base runner is obligated to return to her base without undue delay.

EFFECT:

- i) When the ball is live and the runner is not given sufficient time to return to a base, she will not be called out for being off base before the pitcher releases the ball, “No Pitch” shall be declared.**
 - ii) When the ball is dead, the ball will not be put in play until each runner has retouched her base. However, a runner may be declared out if, after being allowed a reasonable amount of time, she fails to retouch the base.**
- 11) Should “Timeout/Time” be called while a runner is touching a base, she may not advance during a suspension of play.

SECTION 12 – CONDUCT

12.1 Coaches' Conduct

The highest standards of sportsmanship and conduct are expected of players, coaches and others associated with the game. Coaches are expected to be leaders by complying with the principles and ethics described in the Code of Conduct.

12.2 Coaches Misconduct

Misconduct is any act of unprofessional behavior that discredits the game of softball. Specifically, a coach shall not remove his or her team from the field or refuse to continue play due to a dispute with game officials.

12.3 Unsportsmanlike Conduct

No coach, team or player shall at any time, whether from the bench, the coach's box, the playing field or elsewhere:

- a) Use profanity toward, bait or otherwise taunt an umpire or opponent.
- b) Incite or attempt to incite, sign or byword, a demonstration by spectators
- c) Make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about opposing players or game officials

EFFECT: (a-c) The umpire shall issue a warning to the offending individual and notify their coach. If the umpire judges the act to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected without warning. Subsequent violation by the same individual shall result in ejection.

- d) Call "Timeout/Time" or employ any other word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher throw an illegal pitch. If an illegal pitch is thrown, it shall be declared, "No Pitch".

EFFECT: No pitch and warning. A repeat of any such act by any member of the team that has been warned shall result in the offender(s) being ejected from the game.

12.4 Fighting

There is no place in softball for physical abuse of officials or fighting amongst player/ coaches / opponents or spectators. Aggressors perpetrating these actions shall be:

EFFECT: Ejected from the facility for the remainder of that game. If the same perpetrators have a second offense in that tournament, they will be ejected from the tournament.

12.5 Equipment Misuse

No player or coach shall deliberately throw or kick a piece of equipment as a result of disgust or frustration.

EFFECT: The umpire shall issue a warning to the offending individual, unless in the umpire's judgment the act to be so flagrant that the offender shall be

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ejected without warning. Any subsequent offense shall result in the ejection of the offender.

12.6 Electronic Equipment

Electronic equipment used for communication, may be used on the field or in the dugouts. (Ex. cell phones, pagers electronic scoring, etc.)

12.7 Use of Tobacco Products / Illegal Drugs

1) The use of tobacco products / illegal drugs by players, managers, coaches and trainers is prohibited while on site for competition.

EFFECT: Players, managers, coaches and athletic trainers who use tobacco products / illegal drugs who violate this policy shall be ejected for the remainder of that game.

2) Umpires and other tournament officials are prohibited from using tobacco products / illegal drugs as previously described are:

EFFECT: The tournament director and UIC reserve the right to remove that official for the remainder of the tournament.

12.8 Use of Artificial Noisemaking Devices

1. The use of airhorns, sirens or any other type of instruments that make a loud, shrill noise that could be confused with safety warnings for weather related issues are prohibited.

2. Artificial noises, defined as any noise not associated with yelling or clapping must cease when the batter enters the batter's box, or the pitcher toes the rubber, whichever comes first.

EFFECT: Violators refusing to comply may result in removal from the game, which may include the coach of the offending team.

12.9 Negatively Affecting the Game

When it is determined by multiple officials (on-field umpires, UIC and tournament hosts(s), that individual(s) or teams are negatively affecting the game in a negative manner by their actions, the result may be:

- The individuals whose action is in question may be removed from the game
- The game may be forfeited
- The team may be expelled from the tournament immediately.

SECTION 13 – UMPIRE

13.1 Apparel and Equipment

IFA has adopted a mandatory umpire uniform for use throughout all regions. Heather grey slacks are mandatory for all age levels. Shorts are not acceptable. IFA has adopted the powder blue shirt as its official shirt. These shirts should have the IFA logo present on the left breast of the shirt. Navy blue umpire caps are the only acceptable cap and should bear the IFA logo. No other logo or insignias are permissible. Grey, black or navy-blue ball bags are acceptable for the home plate umpire. Black shoes are mandatory for IFA umpires, both plate and base.

- d) The plate umpire shall wear protective equipment that includes a mask, with padding and throat protector. (An extended wire protector may be worn in lieu of a throat protector on the mask).
- e) It is required that umpiring crew have a current IFA softball rulebook accessible during competition.
- f) It is required that all umpires wear appropriate protective equipment.

13.2 Duties

Any umpire has the authority to order player coach or team personnel to do or refrain from doing anything that affects the administering of these rules and to enforce the prescribed penalties. Each umpire is an approved official and is authorized and required to enforce each section of these rules. Further, the umpires shall be obliged to conduct the game under conditions conducive to the highest standards of good sportsmanship. The plate umpire shall have the authority to make decisions on any situations not specifically covered in the rules. The following is general information for umpires:

- 1) It is strongly recommended that the umpire not be affiliated with a team or its institution.
- 2) The umpires should confirm the date, time and place of the game and should report to the playing field at least 10 minutes ahead of time, start the game at the designated time and leave the field when the game is over. The umpire's jurisdiction begins when he/she call for the pregame conference at home plate and it ends when the final out is made, and he/she confirms the final score/results with the official scorekeeper.
- 3) The umpire should introduce themselves to the coaches and other appropriate game personnel.
- 4) The umpire shall inspect the playing field and equipment.
- 5) At the pre-game meeting, the plate umpire shall clarify any ground rules or exception rules in effect for the representatives of each team.
- 6) Each umpire shall have the authority to make decisions on violations committed during playing time or during suspension of play.

SECTION 13 – UMPIRE

- 7) No umpire has the authority to set aside decisions made by another umpire within the limits of his/her respective duties as outlined in these rules.
- 8) An umpire should consult his/her associate(s) upon request of a head coach; however, the final decision will rest with the umpire whose exclusive authority it is to make the decision and who requests the opinion of the other umpire(s).
- 9) In order to define respective duties, the umpire whose primary responsibility is the judging of balls and strikes shall be designated as the plate umpire, while the umpire(s) whose primary responsibility is the rendering of base decisions shall be designated as the base umpire(s).
- 10) The plate umpire and base umpire(s) shall have equal authority to:
 - a) Call a runner out for leaving a base too soon;
 - b) Call "Timeout/Time" for suspension of play;
 - c) Eject or suspend a player, coach or other team personnel; and
 - d) Call illegal pitches.
- 11) The umpire shall declare the batter or runner out, without waiting for an appeal for such decisions, in all cases in which such player is retired in accordance with these rules. Unless appealed to, the umpire shall not render a decision on:
 - a) Participation by an improper player.
 - b) Missing a base
 - c) Leaving a base on a caught fly ball before the ball is first touched.
 - d) Attempting to advance to second base after making the turn at first base.
 - e) Switching base runners on occupied bases.
- 12) The umpire shall not impose an effect on a team for any infraction of a rule when imposing the effect would be an advantage to the offending team.

13.3 Plate Umpire

The plate umpire shall:

- 1) Have full charge of and be responsible for the proper conduct of the game.
- 2) Take a position behind the catcher.
- 3) Have the authority to make decisions on any situation(s) not specifically covered in the rules.
- 4) Call and count all balls and strikes and give a clear visual and verbal indication of all balls and strikes.
- 5) By agreement and in cooperation with the base umpire(s), make decisions on plays, fair and foul balls, and legally or illegally caught balls. On plays that necessitate the base umpire leaving the infield in a two-umpire system, the plate umpire will assume the duties normally required of the base umpire.
- 6) Determine and declare whether:

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- a) A batter is out when, with two strikes, a batted ball is bunted foul;
 - b) A batted ball touches the person or clothing of the batter; and
 - c) A fly ball is an infield fly.
- 7) Call or indicate “Play Ball” to start the game or resume play, “Timeout/Time” to temporarily suspend play, and “Game” to terminate play for a regulation game.
 - 8) Document and announce each substitution to the opposing coaches and scorekeepers, official scorer and public announcer, if applicable.
 - 9) Render base decisions as indicated in the umpire’s mechanics manual.
 - 10) Have the lights turned on when necessary for safety reasons. Whenever possible, this should be done at the beginning of an inning.
 - 11) Be the final judge, when the tournament director is not on site as to the suspension, resumption or termination of play should inclement weather or unfit conditions prevail during a game. The umpire shall consult with the tournament director, when available as to relevant weather changes.
 - 12) Penalize rule infractions (such as illegal pitch, interference, delay of game, unwarranted disputing of a decision, unsportsmanlike conduct or defacement of the ball by the pitcher).
 - 13) Conduct the pre-game meeting with the proper game personnel before the game begins.
 - 14) Assume all duties when circumstances warrant starting or finishing a game as a single umpire.

13.4 Base Umpire(s)

The base umpire(s) shall:

- 1) Take such positions on the playing field as outlined in the umpire’s mechanics manual
- 2) Assist the plate umpire in administering the rules of the game.
- 3) Render base decisions as indicated in the umpire’s mechanics manual.
- 4) Call base runners out for leaving a base before the pitch has been released.

13.5 Change of Umpires

Teams may not request a change of umpires during a tournament/game. No umpire may be replaced during a game unless incapacitated by injury or illness.

13.6 Pre-Game Responsibilities

Before the start of the game, the plate umpire shall:

- 1) For legality and safety, inspect the equipment, particularly the bats, catcher’s helmets, batting helmets and cleats. Umpires should make certain that dented bent or illegal bats or broken helmets are not available for use during the game. (i.e., not allowed in dugout)

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EFFECT: If, after one warning, a player continues to use illegal equipment, the individual shall be ejected from the game.

- 2) Check the condition of the field, inspect all playing lines and marker for proper location and adequate visibility.

Note: Once a game has started, if it is discovered by or brought to the attention of the umpire that the pitching or base distances are incorrect, the error shall be corrected immediately, with no penalty, and the game shall continue from that point. This shall be known as "Correct and Continue".

- 3) The umpire shall have an adequate supply of softballs to begin play. Such balls shall be put in play when:
 - a) A ball has been hit out of the playing field;
 - b) A ball has been rejected because it is scuffed, discolored or otherwise unsuitable for play;
 - c) A pitcher requests a different ball. The game should not be delayed retrieving a particular ball that may have been fouled away from the playing area.

13.7 Pre-game Meeting

Before the scheduled starting time, the plate umpire shall conduct the pre-game meeting with the team personnel of the opposing teams. During this meeting, the plate umpire shall:

- 1) Receive from the home team and visiting team their respective batting order on line-up card. The umpire shall review each team's line-up card with its coach to be sure it is complete and shall provide one last opportunity for changes without the changes being charged as substitutions. Once returned to the umpire, each team's line-up is official. In the event of a subsequent change, the plate umpire shall report the substitution to the opposing team, official scorer and public-address announcer, if applicable.

Note: Players not listed on the official line-up card are not eligible to play.

- 2) At the pre-game meeting, the plate umpire shall clarify any ground rules or exception rules in effect for the representatives of each team.
- 3) Review special game rules (e.g., tiebreaker, conference or tournament rules).
- 4) Review certain areas of playing rules that may cause confusion.

13.8 Procedures at End of Game

At the completion of the game, the plate umpire shall return the game balls to the appropriate games management staff or coach and report any flagrant conduct or irregularity associated with the game. The umpires shall give the teams reasonable time for a possible appeal play or protest. The umpire(s)

SECTION 13 – UMPIRE

shall leave the field together in as polite, business-like and inconspicuous a manner, as possible.

13.9 Umpire's Judgment

1) Any umpire's decision that involves judgment may, under certain circumstances, be reviewed, but is never subject to protest. Decisions rendered by any umpire should be reversed when the umpire is convinced the decision is in violation of one of these rules. In case the head coach of either team does seek reversal of a decision based solely on a point of rules, the umpire whose decision is in question will, if in doubt, confer with his/her associate(s) before taking any action, but under no circumstances will any player or person other than the coach of either team, have any grounds to protest any decision and seek its reversal on a claim that it is in conflict with these rules.

Exceptions:

- a) On a decision regarding a checked swing, when asked by the catcher, the plate umpire must seek a decision from the appropriate base umpire. Such a request may be made only when the plate umpire has called the pitch a ball.
 - b) On a decision regarding a pick-off, when asked by either coach, the base umpire must confer with his/her partner.
- 2) Under no circumstances will any umpire seek to reverse a judgment decision made by an associate(s), unless asked to do so.
- 3) The umpires may rectify any situation in which the reversal of an umpire's decision or a delayed call by an umpire places a batter-runner, a runner or the defensive team in jeopardy. This correction is not possible after one legal or illegal pitch has been thrown or after the pitcher and all infielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory.

13.10 Suspension of Play

- 1) An umpire may temporarily suspend play in the following situations:
- a) When, in his or her judgment, conditions justify such action.
 - b) When he/she leaves his or her position to brush the plate or to perform other duties not directly connected with the calling of plays.
 - c) When a batter or pitcher steps out of position for a legitimate reason.
- 2) An umpire shall not temporarily suspend play in the following situations:
- a) While any play is in progress, including when a thrown ball hits an umpire.
 - b) After the pitcher has started her delivery.

SECTION 13 – UMPIRE

- c) In case of injury until all plays in progress have been completed or each runner has been held at her base. Exception: When necessary to protect an injured player, the umpire may suspend play immediately.
- d) At the request of players or coaches until all action in progress has been completed.

13.11 Umpire's Responsibility for a Protest

All protests must be made to the plate umpire. When a coach claims that an umpire's final decision violates rules, the plate umpire must:

- a) Allow the coach the right to request a protest to the tournament officials;
- b) Summon the proper tournament officials for protest consultation
- c) Advise the scorekeeper that the game is being halted and time stopped until the protest is resolved.

13.12 Umpire's Responsibility for an Appeal

Once the appeal is made to the umpire whose responsibility it was to watch the base and base runner, that umpire will step forward and make the proper call.

13.13 Umpire's Responsibility for Ejections and / or Suspensions

The umpire has the authority to remove player and/or other team personnel from further participation in a game (which is ejection) for just cause.

SECTION 14 – 10U RULES & ADULT WOMEN’S RULES_____

14.1 - 10U Field Recommendations:

Field recommendations for 10U should be:

- a) Base distances should be 60’.
- b) Pitching distance should be 35’.
- c) Outfield fence distances should be minimum of 150’ and a maximum of 225’.

14.2 Equipment and Uniforms

Ball should be:

- a) Yellow optic cover, 11-inch ball, with a COR of .47 shall be used in all IFA play.

14.3 Batting

Dropped Third Strike Rule will be:

- 1) When with fewer than two outs and first base occupied, the catcher fails to catch a third strike before the ball touches the ground.

EFFECT: The batter is out. The ball is live. Base runners may advance with the liability of being put out.

- 2) When with two outs or fewer than two outs and first base is unoccupied, the catcher fails to catch a third strike before the ball touches the ground.

EFFECT: The ball is live. The batter becomes a batter-runner with the liability to be put out. Base runners may advance with liability to be put out.

14.4 Infield Fly Rule

The traditional infield fly rule will be used in all 10U play in IFA.

(See Section 10.17 on Infield Fly Rule)

14.5 Base Running

Base running has additional limits or liabilities from the standard rules as specified in the IFA rulebook.

14.6 ADULT WOMEN’S RULES

The IFA Adult Women’s Rules will be conducted with the same rules that the 18U “Elite” Division guidelines allow.

- a) Age limitation will be women 19 years or older as of January 1st of the current playing year.
- b) Any rules not addressed by the IFA rulebook will revert to the current NCAA rulebook.

Section 15 – 8U Rules

The 6U & 8U Rules will fall under one of three categories below. Tournament directors may choose to operate under the guidelines below for “Coach Pitch”, “Machine Pitch” or “Live Player Pitch”. Rules not addressed in this section of the 6U & 8U rules will refer to the section of rules in this rulebook. These rules were written to help the 6U & 8U players and coaches develop their skills with the type of play needed for their area.

All current IFA rules will be in effect, unless otherwise noted by the tournament director.

15.1 General Rules

- 1) Format of the tournament, fields and times.....including rescheduling due to weather is at the discretion of the tournament director.
- 2) Any fees, if applicable, with regards to entry, umpires or protests for an area and the refunding of those fees will be set by the tournament.
- 3) Regardless of the format, the coach pitching will be from the offensive team.
- 4) Dropped third strike is not in effect.

15.2 COACH PITCH RULE SET

- 1) Length of game - Coach Pitch
 - a) Is up to the tournament director, however; the recommendation is 55 minutes for pool games and 60 minutes for bracket games or seven (7) innings.
- 2) Runs Allowed Per Inning - Coach Pitch
 - a) Five (5) runs per half inning maximum. After five runs the teams will switch from offense to defense.
- 3) Run Rule - Coach Pitch
 - a) 12 runs after 4 innings
 - b) 10 runs after 5 innings
 - c) If time has expired and either team is behind and cannot catch up or go ahead, the game is over immediately.
- 4) Pitches - Coach Pitch
 - a) Each batter allowed 5 pitches or 3 missed swings.
 - b) However, if the 5th pitch is hit foul, the batter will be given additional pitches until the ball is put in play, swung and missed or let pass.

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- 5) Balls - Coach Pitch
 - a) No balls will be called
- 6) Foul Balls - Coach Pitch
 - a) Foul balls are counted for swings, except on last pitch
- 7) Last Pitch Foul - Coach Pitch
 - a) Unlimited last pitch foul balls
- 8) **NO BUNTING, SLAPPING, STEALING or SLASHING** will be allowed in Coach Pitch
- 9) Walks - Coach Pitch
 - a) There will be no base on balls (walk) awarded, including intentional walks.
- 10) Infield Fly Rule - Coach Pitch
 - a) There will be "NO" Infield Fly Rule.
- 11) Ball Type - Coach Pitch
 - a) Balls must be 11" diameter with .47 C.O.R. and .375 compressions. Color and stitching are optional, as long as all balls are the same in color for any one game.
- 12) Batted Ball - Coach Pitch
 - a) Batted Ball hits pitching coach, is a dead ball and declared no pitch, unless intentionally interfered with by coach. Then the interference rules apply. All runners return to base.
- 13) Batters - Coach Pitch
 - a) Teams may bat the minimum of nine players / up to their entire roster, however; in the event of injury and no substitute player is available, the team will take an out for that place in the batting order. In other words, the batting order will not collapse. The batting line-up also cannot increase; it must stay the same throughout the entire sequence at bat for the game.
 - b) If a team chooses the lesser number of players than the entire roster, substitutions may be made freely, as this is a fundamental building game. However; if they substitute batters those substitutions must remain in the same spot of the batting order. (Ex. A player may not be substituted in the #3 spot, pulled from the game and then substituted in the #6 spot. They must remain in the #3 spot, if they are substituted for again.)

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- 14) Pitching Distance - Coach Pitch
 - a) Pitching Distance is 35 foot
- 15) Base Distance - Coach Pitch
 - a) Bases will be set at 60 feet
- 16) Definition of a Live Ball - Coach Pitch
 - a) A "live ball" begins with a batted ball and continues with all defensive efforts until the umpire declares "time" or "dead ball". Runners may only advance during a live ball.
- 17) Pitching Items - Coach Pitch
 - a) Coach pitches to their own team
 - b) The Coach-Pitcher must keep both feet inside the pitching circle and have one foot in contact with the pitching rubber at all times until the point of release.
 - c) The Coach-Pitcher will use a straight ahead pitching approach.
 - d) The Coach -Pitcher must stay within the boundaries of the 24" pitching rubber. To clarify, the Coach-Pitcher may not pitch from either side of the pitching rubber so as to gain the advantage of a directional hit.
 - i) **PENALTY:** If at any time prior to release of the ball, the Coach-Pitcher steps outside of the pitching circle or is outside the imaginary 24" pitching rubber boundaries or throws a pitch without a foot in contact with the pitching rubber, a strike will be called on the batter.
 - e) The Coach-Pitcher cannot "coach" the batters from the mound. Coach-Pitchers are allowed to speak to the batters prior to them entering the batter's box. Once these players have entered the box, they no longer are allowed to speak to the hitters with such statements as "swing, run, go, no, slide, etc."
 - i) **PENALTY**
 - (1) First Offense: Coach-Pitcher is warned, and a strike is added to the batter. If this is the third strike, the batter is out.

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(2) Second Offense: The batter is immediately called out.

18) Base Running - Coach Pitch

- a) While the ball is in play, all runners are free to advance at their own risk. Play is stopped on defense by stopping the lead runner. Once the lead runner has been stopped, the ball is no longer in play, the ball is thrown to the pitcher's circle and no runner may advance.
 - i) EXAMPLE #1: Runner "A" is at 2nd base when the batter (Runner "B") hits the ball. Runner "A" then runs and reaches third base safely, while the ball is fielded and is thrown to the 3rd baseman that now possesses the ball and is capable of tagging Runner "A" out if she was to attempt to advance. The umpire declares play stopped. The ball is then thrown to the pitching circle and Runner "B" is halted at 1st base.
 - ii) EXAMPLE #2: Using the same scenario as Example #1, Runner "A" is at 2nd base when the batter (Runner "B") hits the ball. Runner "A" however is tagged out prior to reaching 3rd base. In this scenario, the ball is NOT dead, but rather Runner "B" would now become the lead runner and may continue to advance at her own risk until she is declared out or her progress is stopped by the defense, resulting in the umpire stopping the play and the ball being thrown to the pitching circle.

19) Leading Off - Coach Pitch

- a) Players can leave the base when the coach releases the pitch. Runners must return to the bag they obtained their lead from when the ball is thrown back into the pitching circle. Again, there is NO stealing.

20) Defense - Coach Pitch

- a) There may be up to ten (10) defensive players allowed on the field.

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- 21) Thrown Ball - Coach Pitch
 - a) A thrown ball accidentally hits pitching coach is a dead ball
- 22) Intentional Thrown Ball Interference- Coach Pitch
 - a) Intentional interference by coach, interference rules apply.
- 23) Thrower Intentionally Hits Pitching Coach- Coach Pitch
 - a) If the umpire determines the ball was intentionally thrown at a coach, play is stopped, the ball is dead.
- 24) Overthrow Rule: The overthrow rule is NOT in effect. All balls are live play until the pitcher has control of the ball in the outer circle, runners can continue to run until this time.
- 25) Defensive Coaches- Coach Pitch
 - a) Two coaches can stand in the outfield in foul ball area only, one on each side. (Left side and right side)
- 26) Protests- Coach Pitch
 - a) All umpire judgment calls are final....."NO" protests allowed.
- 27) Position of Player/Pitcher- Coach Pitch
 - a) The position of the player pitcher (defensive) before the pitch shall be outside the pitching circle and behind the pitching rubber.
- 28) Umpire: The tournament director has the option to utilize one or two umpires in coach pitch.

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15.3 MACHINE PITCH RULE SET

- 1) Runs per Inning – Machine Pitch
 - a) A maximum of five (5) runs can be scored each inning by each team
- 2) Base Distance – Machine Pitch
 - a) Bases will be set at 60 feet.
- 3) Length of Game – Machine Pitch
 - a) Is up to the tournament director, however; the recommendation is 55 minutes for pool games and 60 minutes for bracket games or seven (7) innings.
- 4) Run Rule – Machine Pitch
 - a) 12 runs after 4 innings
 - b) 10 runs after 5 innings
 - c) If time has expired and either team is behind and cannot catch up or go ahead, the game is over immediately.
- 5) Pitching Machine Items – Machine Pitch
 - a) Distance for center of the machine shall be thirty-five (35) feet.
 - b) Speed for machine shall be set between 35-36mph.
 - c) Prior to each game, the umpire will have each coach feed at least one pitch and obtain consensus that the machine is set correctly.
 - d) The umpire may adjust the machine if he/she believes it is needed, this includes any time the machine has been hit and is not set correctly.
 - e) A coach cannot adjust the pitching machine without umpire approval.
 - i) **PENALTY:** First offense will be a warning
 - ii) **PENALTY:** Second offense will be automatic removal from the pitching coach position

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- f) Each team can adjust the pitching machine once per game. They must tell the umpire prior to the adjusting and it must be done between innings when the adjusting team is coming up to hit.
- 6) Overthrow Rule – Machine Pitch
 - a) The overthrow rule is NOT in effect. All balls are live play until the pitcher has control of the ball in the outer circle, runners can continue to run. The only time runners cannot move more than one base on an overthrow is when attempting to steal on a pitch.
- 7) Offensive Lineup – Machine Pitch
 - a) The batting lineup may be any number from nine (9) to all players present. However, when the original lineup is reduced with no eligible subs, an out is taken with each slot not filled. An automatic out will be taken with a line-up of only eight (8) players.
- 8) Defensive Positions – Machine Pitch
 - a) There may be up to ten (10) defensive players allowed on the field.
- 9) Substitutions – Machine Pitch
 - a) There are unlimited substitutions defensively and offensively. Coaches MUST make umpires aware of any offensive substitution/changes only.
- 10) Pitcher Position – Machine Pitch
 - a) At the start of the pitch, one player shall be in the pitcher's position on either side of the pitching machine with at least one (1) foot in the pitching circle. The pitcher must stand with at least one (1) foot on the chalk line even with the pitching rubber until the ball is pitched out of the machine. The pitcher cannot leave their position until the ball comes out of the machine.

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- 11) Infield Fly Rule – Machine Pitch
- The infield fly rule is NOT in effect.
- 12) Batting – Machine Pitch
- The batter will receive five (5) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes, whichever comes first.
 - Each pitch will count as one of the five (5) pitches, even if the batter does not swing.
 - If the fifth pitch is hit (not bunted) foul, the batter will remain at bat as long as they continue to foul off pitches.
 - Batters hit by a pitch will NOT be awarded 1st base.
 - There shall be NO base on balls (walk) awarded.
 - Bunting is allowed. A player may square to bunt and pull back. A bunt that is fouled on the third strike or fifth pitch results in the batter being out.
 - Slashing is NOT allowed. A batter CAN NOT square to bunt, pull back and then either hit or bunt the ball. If the batter does this, she will be called out. No runners may advance.
 - Slap Hitting (not to be confused with slashing) is allowed. Slap hitting is when the batter actually breaks their wrists in an attempt to hit the ball as opposed to drag bunting which may or may not be allowed under the bunting rule.

******NOTE:** Please contact your tournament director to get a clear understanding of what will and will not be allowed in their tournament with regards to “Bunting, Slashing, Slap Hitting and Drag Bunting”.....****

- 13) Base Running – Machine Pitch
- Runners can only score on a batted ball.
 - On a batted ball, runners can advance unlimited bases until the pitcher has control of the ball in the circle.

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- 14) Ball Type – Machine Pitch
- a) Balls must be 11" diameter with .47 C.O.R. and .375 compressions. Color and stitching are optional, as long as all balls are the same in color for any one game.
 - b) A runner may NOT leave a base until the ball leaves the pitching machine
 - i) PENALTY: Leaving early, the runner will be called out, no pitch is called and any other runners on base will have to return to the base they were at prior to that pitch.
- 15) Stealing – Machine Pitch
- a) A runner can advance / steal only one base per pitch. If they attempt to steal a 2nd base on the same pitch, they are liable to be put out. At the end of the play, if the runner is safe and has advanced more than one base, the umpire will return the runner to the correct base.
 - b) A runner cannot steal home. If they advance home, they are liable to be put out. At the end of the play, if the runner is safe and has advanced, the umpire will return the runner to the correct base.
- 16) Offensive Coaches – Machine Pitch
- a) In addition to the base coaches, only a coach in the pitcher's circle is allowed on the field of play. The machine pitch coach may coach the batter prior to the pitch. He/she may NOT coach a runner at ANY time.
 - i) After a batter hits the ball, the Machine Pitch coach shall make an attempt to duck or crouch behind the pitching machine and should stay inside the circle away from the play.

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- 17) Time – Machine Pitch
 - a) Time will be called when the pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitcher’s circle. If a runner is more than halfway to the next base when time is called, the runner will be awarded the next base. If they are not halfway to the next base when time is called, they will be returned to the previous base safely.
- 18) Dead Balls – Machine Pitch
 - a) A batted ball that hits the pitching machine shall be ruled a dead ball and the batter is awarded 1st base.
 - b) A batted ball that hits the Machine Pitch coach is ruled a dead ball and the batter is awarded first base
 - c) If in the umpire’s judgment, a coach interferes intentionally, the ball will be called dead, all runners return to their bases and the pitch is replayed.
- 19) Thrown Ball Hits Pitching Coach – Machine Pitch
 - a) If a thrown ball hits the Pitching Coach or Machine, it is declared a dead ball.
- 20) Intentionally Thrown Ball Hits Pitching Coach–Machine Pitch
 - a) If in the judgment of the umpire a thrown ball intentionally hits the Pitching Coach or Machine, play is stopped with a dead ball call.
- 21) Umpire: The tournament director has the option to utilize one or two umpires in machine pitch.

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15.4 Live Player Pitch Rules

- 1) Pitching Distance – Live Player Pitch
 - a) Pitching Distance is set at 30 foot.
- 2) Live Pitcher – Live Player Pitch
 - a) A team player pitches
- 3) Ball Type – Live Player Pitch
 - a) Balls must be 11" diameter with .47 C.O.R. and .375 compressions. Color and stitching are optional, as long as all balls are the same in color for any one game.
- 4) Base Distance – Live Player Pitch
 - a) Bases will be set at 60 feet.
- 5) Bunting – Live Player Pitch
 - a) Bunting is allowed
- 6) Stealing – Live Player Pitch
 - a) Runners at 1st or 2nd may advance one base.
 - b) Runners at 3rd may NOT steal home
- 7) Dropped 3rd strike – Live Player Pitch
 - a) Dropped 3rd strike is NOT in effect
- 8) Game Length – Live Player Pitch
 - a) Is up to the tournament director, however; the recommendation is 55 minutes for pool games and 60 minutes for bracket games or seven (7) innings.
- 9) Run Rule – Live Player Pitch
 - a) 10 runs after 4 innings
 - b) 7 runs after 5 innings
- 10) Defensive Positions - Live Player Pitch
 - a) There may be up to ten (10) defensive players allowed on the field.
- 11) Substitutions - Live Player Pitch
 - a) There are unlimited substitutions defensively and offensively. Coaches MUST make umpires aware of any offensive substitution/changes only.

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- 12) Runs per Inning Live Player Pitch - Live Player Pitch
 - a) A maximum of five (5) runs can be scored each inning by each team
- 13) Offensive Lineup - Live Player Pitch
 - a) The batting lineup may be any number from nine (9) to all players present. However, when the original lineup is reduced with no eligible subs, an out is taken with each slot not filled. An automatic out will be taken with a line-up of only eight (8) players.
- 14) Regulation play for Live Pitch games listed below:
 - a) Pitching
 - b) Balls
 - c) Walks
 - d) Batters and out calls
 - e) Batted Balls
 - f) Foul Balls
 - g) Base running, unless otherwise noted.
 - h) Rules / Items not addressed revert to the regulation play inside the regular rulebook.

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- 1) Length of Game: T-Ball
 - a) Is up to the tournament director, however; the recommendation is 55 minutes for pool games and 60 minutes for bracket games or seven (7) innings
- 2) Runs Allowed Per Inning: T-Ball
 - a) Five (5) runs per half inning maximum. After five runs the teams will switch from offense to defense.
- 3) Run Rule: T-Ball
 - a) 12 runs after 4 innings
 - b) 10 runs after 5 innings
 - c) If time has expired and either team is behind and cannot catch up or go ahead, the game is over immediately.
- 4) Tee Placement: T-Ball
 - a) Place "tip to tip" to home plate.
- 5) Swings: T-Ball
 - a) To start play the umpire will place the ball on hitting tee and call "Batter Up".
 - b) Batter will position themselves in the box and address the ball as the umpire holds the ball on the tee.
 - c) Umpire will ask if the batter is ready and removes hand from ball. If the ball is addressed after the removal of the hand, it is a strike and ball is dead.
 - d) Contact even partially must be made with the ball. This is a judgment call by the umpire. All balls hit foul or swung at and missed; even if the tee alone is hit will be a strike.
 - e) After two strikes, there will be an unlimited amount of foul balls allowed, until one is hit fair or there is a strikeout by missing the ball or hitting the tee alone.
 - f) Umpire will call "time" after every play and declare ball dead.
- 6) Foul Balls: T-Ball
 - a) Foul balls are counted for swings, except on last pitch.

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- 7) Last Pitch Foul: T-Ball
 - a) Unlimited last pitch foul balls
- 8) NO Bunting, Slapping, Stealing or Slashing will be allowed in T-Ball.
- 9) Foul Balls: T-Ball
 - a) Foul balls are counted for swings, except on last pitch.
- 10) Last Pitch Foul: T-Ball
 - a) Unlimited last pitch foul balls
- 11) Infield Fly Rule: T-Ball
 - a) There will be “NO” Infield Fly Rule.
- 12) Ball Type: T-Ball
 - a) Balls must be an 11” “Safety” soft-core ball. Color and stitching are optional, as long as all the balls are the same in color for any one game.
- 13) Batters: T-Ball
 - a) Teams may bat the minimum of nine players / up to their entire roster, however; in the event of injury and no substitute player is available – the team will take an out for that place in the batting order. In other words, the batting order will not collapse. The batting line-up also cannot increase; it must stay the same throughout the entire sequence at bat for the game.
 - b) If a team chooses the lesser number of players than the entire roster, substitutions may be made freely, as this is a fundamental building game, however; if they substitute batters those substitutions must remain in the same spot of the batting order. (Ex. A player may not be substituted in the #3 spot, pulled from the game and then substituted in the #6 spot. They must remain in the #3 spot, if they are substituted for again.)

Section 16: 6U Tee Ball Rule Set

- 14) Base Distance: T-Ball
- a) Bases will be set at 60 feet
 - b) Pitching Rubber Distance will be 35' with an 8' Circumference Circle. Defensive pitcher must be in close proximity to and with the pitching rubber.
- 15) Definition of a Live Ball: T-Ball
- a) A "live ball" begins with a batted ball and continues with all defensive efforts until the umpire declares "time" or "dead ball". Runners may only advance during a live ball.
- 16) Base Running: T-Ball
- a) While the ball is in play, all runners are free to advance at their own risk. Play is stopped on defense by stopping the lead runner. Once the lead runner has been stopped, the ball is no longer in play, the ball is thrown to the pitcher's circle and no runner may advance.
 - i) Example #1: Runner "A" is at 2nd base when the batter (Runner "B") hits the ball. Runner "A" then runs and reaches third base safely, while the ball is fielded and is thrown to the 3rd baseman that now possesses the ball and is capable of tagging Runner "A" out if she was to attempt to advance. The umpire declares play stopped. The ball is then thrown to the pitching circle and Runner "B" is halted at 1st base.
 - ii) Example #2: Using the same scenario as Example #1, Runner "A" is at 2nd base when the batter (Runner "B") hits the ball. Runner "A", however; is tagged out prior to reaching 3rd base. In this scenario, the ball is not dead, but rather Runner "B" would now become the lead runner and may continue to advance at her own risk until she is

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declared out and her progress is stopped by the defense, resulting in the umpire stopping play and the ball being thrown to the pitching circle.

- 17) Leading Off: T-Ball
 - a) There will be “NO” stealing.
- 18) Defense: T-Ball
 - a) There will be ten (10) defensive players allowed on the field.
- 19) Thrown Ball: T-Ball
 - a) Accidentally hits defensive coach, in foul territory, it is a live ball.
 - b) If it accidentally hits a defensive coach in fair territory, it is a dead ball.
- 20) Intentional Thrown Ball Interference: T-Ball
 - a) Intentional interference by coach, interference rules apply.
- 21) Overthrows: T-Ball
 - a) An infielder must have possession of the ball on the infield to stop play. Any overthrow past first or third base is a dead ball and the batter runner is awarded the base they are running to, plus one base. All other runners must be forced to advance.
- 22) Defensive Coaches: T-Ball
 - a) Two coaches can stand in the outfield in foul ball area only, one on each side. (Left side and right side)
- 23) Protests: T-Ball
 - a) All umpire judgment calls are final..... “NO” protests allowed.
- 24) Players: T-Ball
 - a) Each team may have a max of two (2) male players on their roster. These players must be eligible for the 6U division “Only”. This exception only applies to the 6U Division.
- 25) Umpire: The tournament director has the option to utilize one or two umpires in tee ball.

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