

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

SOFTBALL GENERAL RULES OF THE GAME

All softball rules as defined by the Amateur Softball Association of America (Current ASA Fast Pitch) are applicable except as modified below:

WALKS

There are unlimited walks allowed in all age brackets, with the maximum of 9 in the 10 batter brackets (with the exception of the 7/8 bracket - see 10th batter rule); and limitless in our 9 player GOLD brackets where you need three (3) outs to end the inning.

TENTH BATTER RULE

This rule applies to all divisions in the first half of the season. In the second half, it only applies to the 7-8, 9-10, 11-12 (Silver & Bronze only), 13-14 (Silver & Bronze only), and the 15-18 (Silver & Bronze only) divisions. Ten (10) batters shall be permitted to bat per inning (if only nine (9) players are in the line-up, there will be a maximum of nine (9) players per inning). The tenth batter of an inning cannot walk; she must hit or strike out. If only 9 players are available, the 9th batter is subject to the same rule, she cannot walk, and she must hit or strike out. In the 7-8 brackets, only eight (8) batters shall be permitted to bat per inning and the 8th batter can walk. However, if the last batter is hit by a pitch, the coach has the option of having the batter continue the at-bat or take a base. Game situations for the 10th batter rule are in the event that there are less than two (2) outs. When the ball is put in play and there are less than two (2) outs, play is ongoing until the ball is brought to the plate and controlled in all divisions except the 7-8 division where the play will end when the ball is in the vicinity of the pitching rubber (8' radius).

BASE RUNNING RULES

Continuous walks are not allowed in any divisions except the (9) player GOLD divisions.

SLIDE, SURRENDER or AVOID

No runner shall be allowed to barrel into a fielder. The "Slide or Surrender" rule is applicable in all cases and is to be strictly enforced. Any player that intentionally tries to injure a fielder shall be called out and be ejected from the game.

Note: This rule is for the safety of the players—If there is a play at a base or the plate, the runner must slide, go around the fielder (within the base lines), or give up or she is automatically out. If there is not a play and a fielder is blocking a base or the plate, the runner must slide, go around the fielder (within the base lines), or give up. In this case, the umpire will give a delayed-dead ball signal and after the play has stopped, call obstruction on the fielder and award the runner the base she would have reached in the umpire's judgment had the obstruction not occurred.

Incidental contact in this situation will be allowed. However, if in the umpire's judgment, the runner deliberately runs into the fielder, the obstruction will be waived off and the runner will be declared out.

REQUIRED NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- Under NO circumstances shall any team be permitted to play with less than the required number of players present. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**
- Ten (10) player brackets may play with a minimum of nine (9) players
- Nine (9) player brackets may play with a minimum of eight (8) players.

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POSITIONS**

1. In the ten (10) player brackets, each team will have player's at all ten (10) positions.
2. The outfielders may be positioned as an "Umbrella Field" with all 4 outfielders playing true outfield positions (LF, LC, RC & RF) *or* the outfielders may be positioned with 3 in the outfield (LF, CF, RF) and a short fielder (SF). When choosing to play a short fielder, the player must take her position no less than ten (10) feet behind the base path. Players may not "creep" into the infield.

~ This rule does not apply to the 7/8 bracket. In the 7/8s, outfielders must play with 4 outfielders (LF, LC, RC & RF).

APPEAL PLAY

If a runner fails to touch a base, only a coach may make an appeal. This shall be a "Dead Ball" appeal, which will be initiated in the following manner:

1. The coach will inform the umpire of the appeal.
2. The pitcher, from the mound, will throw the ball to the appealed base where the fielder will catch the ball and tag the base.
3. At this point, the umpire will render a decision.

TEAM EQUIPMENT

HEADGEAR AND HELMETS

Protective headgear with earflaps and a face cage is **mandatory** for **batters and base runners**. (Must meet the NOCSAE Standard. Further information regarding this standard can be found at www.nocsa.org). Runners on the base paths must wear a standard protective helmet with earflaps and a face cage.

CATCHER'S EQUIPMENT

All catchers must wear a standard protective helmet with earflaps (No skullcaps), a mask with a throat guard, shin guards, and a chest protector (women's version recommended) are mandatory. Under no circumstances shall any player be allowed to catch without this equipment (the game will be considered a forfeit).

BATS

Official softball bats only—No little league or hardball bats are permitted. **All bats in the 9/10 through 15/18 age brackets must be stamped "ASA approved."** T-Ball bats are permitted in the 7-8 Pony Division only.

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HOME TEAM EQUIPMENT & RESPONSIBILITY

SOFTBALLS

Two (2) new softballs - white or yellow (ASA) approved only. (Appropriate ball size is listed in each age divisions' individual rules section)

BASES

All teams will use the double-bag at first base (orange-white safety base). This is mandatory in all age brackets. The defense must use the white portion and the offense must use the orange portion when there is a play at first base. The only exception to this would be if the throw to first base is coming from foul territory. In this case, the offense should use the white portion and the defense should use the orange portion. Please keep in mind that the purpose of the safety base is to eliminate collisions.

PITCHING RUBBER

Official softball rubber (24x6). Pitching rubber will be mounted for all games. Mandatory.

HOME PLATE

Measured 18.5 inches wide (this is the black-bordered home plate).

SOFTBALL GENERAL RULES OF THE GAME

TOURNAMENT, VARSITY & CHARTER SCHOOL PLAYERS

A TOURNAMENT TEAM/PLAYER includes players and teams who compete in sanctioned tournaments on a regular basis (i.e. entering and playing in multiple tournaments throughout the season). If an NEPL team registers in a tournament, and they only play in one tournament, they are not considered to be violating the TOURNAMENT TEAM/PLAYER rule. If, however, they register for a tournament and have players who play on another tournament team but they did not report them at the time of the team registration or to their director by the 3rd game of the season in writing, they are in violation of the TOURNAMENT TEAM/PLAYER rule. Any violations of this rule will result in a forfeit of all games in which the tournament team/player played in, as covered under the "penalty" section of the PROTESTS/ELIGIBILITY rule above.

Varsity PLAYERS

Includes players whose High School team competes at the Varsity level of the Philadelphia Public or Catholic Leagues on a regular basis (players who "dress" for Varsity games are considered Varsity level players). As noted in the PROTESTS/ELIGIBILITY rule, these players must be reported to the division director at the time of the team's roster approval. Any additions must be approved by the 3rd game of the season in writing. Any violations of this rule will result in a forfeit of all games in which the Varsity player played, as covered under the "penalty" section of the PROTESTS/ELIGIBILITY rule. Please see the age bracket specific rules for more in depth clarification of these players' status.

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CHARTER SCHOOL PLAYERS & STATUS (Con't)

Charter High School players shall be considered "Varsity" players if the charter school that they play for is registered and competes in either the Philadelphia Public or Catholic Leagues, and competes at the Varsity level of the same. Any player rostered on a High School Varsity team or a Charter School Varsity team is considered a Varsity player and is subject to the NEPL Rules governing Varsity players.

****Please note the following rule change regarding Tournament PITCHERS and Tournament PLAYERS for the 2009 season. This applies to ALL age brackets in the Second Half, Playoffs & Championships.**

~ANY Tournament PITCHERS or Tournament PLAYERS will only be allowed to pitch in the GOLD divisions. ~

~ This means that under no circumstances may a TOURNAMENT PITCHER or PLAYER pitch in any division other than a Gold division after the end of the First Half of the season. This applies to any tournament player, not just tournament pitchers. Tournament players will be allowed to play within the Silver & possibly the Bronze divisions in any other position, but under no circumstances may they pitch anywhere but GOLD divisions. This rule will be strictly enforced. Any violation of this rule will result in a forfeit for the offending team.

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PONY (7-8 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

AGE LIMITS

Cannot be 9 years old before January 1st of the current year.

OFFICIAL SOFTBALL

Eleven inch (11") white or yellow (ASA) approved only.

OFFICIAL BAT

- A. T-ball bats are allowed in this division only.
- B. Official softball bats only. No little league (boys) or hardball bats are permitted. Exceptions, see letter (A).

OFFICIAL BASE

All teams must use orange and white first base safety bags. **Any team not using this base will be fined \$25.00 for the first offense. Any subsequent offenses will incur the \$25.00 fine and cause the coach to be suspended.**

FIELD MEASUREMENTS

- A. Bases—50 feet
- B. Pitching distance—26 feet from the back tip of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber.

GAME TIME LIMITS

- A. All night games are to start at 6:00 P.M. Promptly.
- B. No inning will start after 8:00 P.M.
- C. All day games—no inning will start after 2 hours from the beginning of the game.
- D. No game will start more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the game. This will be considered a forfeit unless weather is the cause of the delay. If weather delays the start or interrupts play after the game has started, then a decision to start or postpone the game is to be made 15 minutes after the delay. After 15 minutes, the umpire will make a decision whether or not to continue the game, wait another 15 minutes, or call the game. After 30 minutes, there will be no further delays.

GAME LENGTH

Six (6) innings, no overtime, except in the playoffs. All games are to be played for a full regulation six (6) innings unless as noted in the termination of the game in play (see below).

****Legal game:** If home team is ahead after 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ innings, or the visiting team is ahead after the 3rd inning.

Termination of a game in play: The umpire shall determine that the weather conditions or darkness shall prohibit the continuation of play. Please note: If the game is called in the middle of an inning, the score reverts back to the last inning played.

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

PONY (7-8 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

BASERUNNING RULES

Fair play rule: (for instructional training)—if a ball is hit to the infield and an attempt is made to throw out a runner and the ball is either dropped or overthrown, the runners cannot advance. We want coaches to encourage these young girls to make the throw to first base and not have to worry about a run scoring. (A single is a single). (Infield is that part of the playing field, in fair territory between home plate and the base lines, including the entire portion of the base).

No stealing.

Leads—During the first half of the season, no runner may leave a base until the ball is hit. During the second half of the season, a runner may leave a base after a pitcher releases the ball. If a player leaves a base early, there will be one (1) team warning issued and after that all runners in violation of this rule will be declared out.

Pick-off attempts by the catcher: Since there is no stealing in this division, the runner must return to the base of origin unless the ball is hit. If a catcher tries to pick a runner off (i.e. because the lead is too big), then the play will be a TAG play. Runners cannot advance on these plays, but they are liable to be put out.

Coaches are not allowed to touch or push runners on base. Such runners will be declared out.

Infield fly rule is not in effect in this division.

On any **ball hit to the outfield**, the play ends when the ball reaches the vicinity of the (8') radius (ball does not have to be controlled by the pitcher). If a ball that is hit to the outfield is thrown into dead ball territory, the runners get the base they are going to when the ball becomes dead (if a runner is on a base, she stays there unless forced by a runner on her way to that base). There are to be no extra bases awarded on overthrows in the 7/8 bracket. Please remember the intent is to encourage the fielders to throw the ball and attempt to make a play. It is not to teach the girls to take advantage of overthrows and continue running around the bases.

Dropped third strike—batter is out, runners stay.

Bunting is not permitted in this division.

No **overthrows** in this division on infield plays.

Continuous walks are not permitted.

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

PONY (7-8 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

PITCHING RULES

1. No pitcher may pitch more than four (4) innings, twelve (12) outs. A starting pitcher may be removed from the pitching position and later return to that position no more than once in a game. But she may play any other fielding position. **(Any pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched. Mid-inning pitching substitutions will be considered as a complete inning pitched.)**
2. A pitcher must have both feet in contact with the pitching rubber, before attempting to pitch.
3. If a pitcher hits (3) batters in a game, she will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. Note: A batter must attempt to get out of the way of the ball.
4. If a ball hits a batter after bouncing in the dirt first, it will be ruled a ball.
5. The pitcher cannot wear any white batting or fielding gloves while pitching.
6. Pitchers may not wear long-sleeve white jerseys while pitching.
7. **A pitched ball that is thrown completely over the cage will be called a “dead ball” and will result in a “ball” on the batter. Runners on base will not advance.**

FIELDING RULES

1. All infielders shall take up their positions at a greater distance from the hitter than the pitching distance (i.e. all players must play behind the pitcher until the pitcher releases the ball).
2. All outfielders (4) shall take up their positions behind the base paths (minimum of 3 feet behind the baselines).

RUN RULE

If a team is behind by 9 runs or more after five (5) innings of play, the game shall be declared over by the umpire. This applies to all divisions.

DEFENSIVE COACH

Only one (1) defensive coach will be permitted on the field (must stay behind the base paths). The coach may set players into position before an inning and aid players before and after the play. Under no circumstances shall a coach be permitted to direct players during a play in progress, or at any time voice their opinion. If this occurs, the umpire will direct the coach to control their mannerisms or be replaced. **A defensive coach should be a teacher and a motivator, with quality skills.**

- **Special NOTE: Since the 7-8 age bracket has traditionally become a “straight-thru” division, due to the significantly lesser number of teams who register, ALL teams will play by SILVER division rules until teams are broken down into GOLD, SILVER and possibly BRONZE divisions at playoffs. These breakdowns and the subsequent Playoff format will be at the discretion of the Commissioner and the 7-8 Director(s).**

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

PEEWEEES (9-10 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

AGE LIMITS

Cannot be 11 years old before Jan. 1st of the current year.

OFFICIAL BALL

Eleven inch (11") white or yellow (ASA) approved only.

OFFICIAL BAT

Official softball bats only. **Bats must be stamped ASA approved.** No little league (boys) or hardball bats are permitted. No exceptions.

OFFICIAL BASE

All teams must use orange and white first base safety bags. **Any team not using this base will be fined \$25.00 for the first offense. Any subsequent offenses will incur the \$25.00 fine and cause the coach to be suspended.**

FIELD MEASUREMENTS

- A. Bases: 55 feet
- B. Pitching distance: 32 feet from the back tip of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber.

GAME TIME LIMITS

All night games are to start at 6:00 P.M. promptly.

No inning will start after 8:00 P.M.

All day games—no inning will start after 2 hours from the beginning of the game.

No game shall start more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the game. This will be considered a forfeit unless weather is the cause of the delay. If weather delays the start or interrupts play after the game has started, then a decision to start or postpone the game is to be made 15 minutes after the delay. After 15 minutes, the umpire will make a decision whether or not to continue the game, wait another 15 minutes, or call the game. After 30 minutes there will be no further delays.

GAME LENGTH

Six (6) innings, no overtime, except in playoffs. All games are to be played for a full regulation six (6) innings unless as noted in the termination of the game in play (see below).

Legal game: If the home team is ahead after **2½** innings, or the visiting team is ahead after the **3rd** inning.

Termination of game in play: The umpire shall determine that the weather conditions or darkness shall prohibit the continuation of play. Please note: if the game is called in the middle of an inning, the score reverts back to the last inning played.

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

PEEWEEES (9-10 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

BASERUNNING RULES

No stealing is permitted until the second half of the season. Once the second half begins, stealing is permitted with exception of home plate. A runner may not advance or score on a catcher's overthrow to 2nd or 3rd base.

Pick-off attempts by the catcher :

1st Half: Since there is no stealing in the first half, the runner must return to the base of origin unless the ball is hit. If a catcher tries to pick a runner off (i.e. because the lead is too big), then the play will be a TAG play. Runners cannot advance on these plays, but they are liable to be put out.

2nd Half:

- 3rd Base: If a catcher tries to pick a runner off at third base, the runner must return to that base but she is liable to be put out. This will be a TAG play. In the event of an overthrow to 3rd base during the pickoff attempt, the runner may not advance to home. She must return to 3rd base.
- 1st/2nd Base: If a catcher tries to pick a runner off, the player must either return to the base of origin or advance to the next base when the catcher releases the ball. The runner cannot advance on the catcher's overthrow (i.e. once she commits to 1st base, she cannot go to 2nd if the ball is overthrown to 1st).

No **lead** until after the ball has left the pitcher's hand. Each team will be given one team warning if this occurs. After the warning, players in violation will be declared out.

Coaches are not allowed to touch or push runners on base, such runners will be declared out.

Infield fly rule is not in effect in this division.

Dropped third strike—batter is out. Runners cannot advance.

Bunting is permitted during the 2nd half of the season. **A player is considered to have "offered" at a bunt if they move the bat toward the ball or attempt to hit the ball with the bat. The bat extended over the plate while the ball is passing is not necessarily considered an attempt and may or may not be called a strike. It is at the sole discretion of the umpire whether the pitch was within the strike zone.**

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

PEEWEEES (9-10 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

PITCHING RULES

1. A pitcher must have both feet in contact with the pitching rubber, before attempting to pitch.
2. If a pitcher hits three (3) batters in a game, she will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. Note: A batter must attempt to get out of the way of the ball.
3. If a ball hits a batter after bouncing in the dirt first, it will be ruled a ball.
4. A pitcher cannot wear any white batting or fielding gloves while pitching.
5. Pitchers may not wear long-sleeve white jerseys while pitching.
6. A pitched ball that is thrown completely over the cage will be called a “dead ball” and will result in a “ball” on the batter. Runners on base will be awarded one base. If a runner is in between bases at the time that the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand, that runner will only be awarded the base they were headed to. (e.g. runner on 1st takes a lead when the ball is released. Ball goes completely over the cage and the runner simultaneously advances herself to 2nd base on a steal. That runner will only be awarded 2nd base, because the ball is considered “dead” from the time it was released from the pitcher’s hand, at which time the runner had not yet achieved 2nd base.)
7. Pitchers may pitch no more than four (4) innings, or twelve (12) outs. (Any pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched. Mid-inning pitching substitutions will be considered as a complete inning pitched.) A starting pitcher may be removed from the pitching position and later return to that position no more than once in a game. She may play any other position.

FIELDING RULES

All infielders shall take up their positions at a greater distance from the hitter than the pitching distance, i.e. all players must play behind the pitcher until the ball is released by the pitcher.

- All outfielders (4) shall take up their positions behind the base paths (minimum of 10 feet behind the baselines).

RUN RULE

If a team is behind by 11 runs or more after five (5) innings of play, the game shall be declared over by the umpire. **This applies to all divisions.**

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

MIDGETS (11-12 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

AGE LIMITS

Cannot be 13 years old before January 1st of the current year.

OFFICIAL BALL

Twelve inch (12") white or yellow (ASA) approved only.

OFFICIAL BAT

Official softball bats only. **Bats must be stamped ASA approved.** No little league (boys) or hardball bats are permitted. No exceptions.

OFFICIAL BASE

All teams must use orange and white first base safety bags. **Any team not using this base will be fined \$25.00 for the first offense. Any subsequent offenses will incur the \$25.00 fine and cause the coach to be suspended.**

FIELD MEASUREMENTS

- A. Bases: 60 feet
- B. Pitching distance: 38 feet from the back tip of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber.

GAME TIME LIMITS

All night games are to start at 6:00 P.M. promptly.

No inning will start after 8:00 P.M.

All day games—no inning will start after 2 hours from the beginning of the game.

No game shall start more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the game. This will be considered a forfeit unless weather is the cause of the delay. If weather delays the start or interrupts play after the game has started, then a decision to start or postpone the game is to be made 15 minutes after the delay. After 15 minutes, the umpire will make a decision whether or not to continue the game, wait another 15 minutes, or call the game. After 30 minutes there will be no further delays.

GAME LENGTH

Seven (7) innings, no overtime, except in playoffs. All games are to be played for a full regulation seven (7) innings unless as noted in the termination of the game in play (see below).

Legal game: If the home team is ahead after 3½ innings, or the visiting team is ahead after the 4th inning.

Termination of game in play: The umpire shall determine that the weather conditions or darkness shall prohibit the continuation of play. Please note: if the game is called in the middle of an inning, the score reverts back to the last inning played.

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

MIDGETS (11-12 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

NUMBER OF FIELD PLAYERS

In the second half of the season, the GOLD division will have 9 players in the field. All other divisions (SILVER & BRONZE) will have 10 players in the field.

BASERUNNING RULES

Stealing is permitted with the exception of home plate. No runner may advance or score on a catcher's overthrow in the 1st half of the season. When the 2nd half of the season starts, the stealing of home plate will be permitted *and runners can advance on catcher's overthrows*.

Pick-off attempts by the catcher (if leads are "too big"):

1st Half:

- 3rd Base: If a catcher tries to pick a runner off at third base, the runner must return to that base but she is liable to be put out. This will be a TAG play. In the event of an overthrow to 3rd base during the pickoff attempt, the runner may not advance to home. She must return to 3rd base.
- 1st/2nd Base: If a catcher tries to pick a runner off, the player must either return to the base of origin or advance to the next base when the catcher releases the ball. The runner cannot advance on the catcher's overthrow (i.e. once she commits to 1st base, she cannot go to 2nd if the ball is overthrown).

2nd Half: All stealing is permitted, excluding home plate, and runners can advance on any throw made by the catcher.

No **lead** until after the ball has left the pitcher's hand. Each team will be given one team warning if this occurs. After the warning, players in violation will be declared out.

Coaches are not allowed to touch or push runners on base, such runners will be declared out.

Infield fly rule is in effect in this division, i.e. runners on 1st and 2nd base or bases are loaded with less than two (2) outs, the batter is declared out and the runners may advance at their own risk. **Note:** If runners advance at their own risk in an infield fly situation, any play on them is not a force out. It is a TAG PLAY.

Overthrow rule—runners take two (2) bases from the time of the throw (the base they are heading to plus one).

e.g. If a runner has not yet achieved 1st base at the time the ball leaves the fielder's hand, and the ball is overthrown to 1st base, the runner will be awarded 2nd base – the base they were headed to (1st) plus one (2nd base).

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

MIDGETS (11-12 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

Dropped Third Strike—2nd half of season only in the GOLD & SILVER divisions. The dropped third strike rule will not be in effect in the BRONZE division (the batter is out). If the catcher drops the third strike or the third strike bounces in the dirt before being caught (the third strike must be a clean catch), the Dropped Third Strike rule is in effect:

- a) The batter is permitted to run only if 1st base is unoccupied at the time of the pitch when there are less than 2 outs.
- b) The batter is permitted to run anytime there are 2 outs.
- c) If the bases are loaded with 2 outs, there is a force out at home plate.

Bunting is permitted. A player is considered to have “offered” at a bunt if they move the bat toward the ball or attempt to hit the ball with the bat. The bat extended over the plate while the ball is passing is not necessarily considered an attempt and may or may not be called a strike. It is at the sole discretion of the umpire whether the pitch was within the strike zone.

Continuous walks are permitted in (9) player bracket only (GOLD Division).

PITCHING RULES

1. A pitcher must have both feet in contact with the pitching rubber, before attempting to pitch.
2. If a pitcher hits three (3) batters in a game, she will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. Note: A batter must attempt to get out of the way of the ball.
3. If a ball hits a batter after bouncing in the dirt first, it will be ruled a ball. Except in the 2nd half in (9) player GOLD bracket — it is a hit batter.
Note: A batter must attempt to get out of the way of the ball.
4. A pitcher cannot wear any white batting or fielding gloves while pitching.
5. Pitchers may not wear long-sleeve white jerseys while pitching.
6. A pitched ball that is thrown completely over the cage will be called a “dead ball” and will result in a “ball” on the batter. Runners on base will be awarded one base. If a runner is in between bases at the time that the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand, that runner will only be awarded the base they were headed to. (e.g. runner on 1st takes a lead when the ball is released. Ball goes completely over the cage and the runner simultaneously advances herself to 2nd base on a steal. That runner will only be awarded 2nd base, because the ball is considered “dead” from the time it was released from the pitcher’s hand, at which time the runner had not yet achieved 2nd base.)
7. Pitchers may pitch no more than five (5) innings, or fifteen (15) outs. A starting pitcher may be removed from the pitching position and later return to that position no more than once in a game. She may play any other position. (Any pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched. Mid-inning pitching substitutions will be considered as a complete inning pitched.)

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

MIDGETS (11-12 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

FIELDING RULES

All infielders shall take up their positions at a greater distance from the hitter than the pitching distance, i.e. all players must play behind the pitcher until the ball is released by the pitcher.

- All outfielders (4) shall take up their positions behind the base paths (minimum of 10 feet behind the baselines).
- In the 2nd half, the GOLD division will have three (3) outfielders. All outfielders shall take up their positions behind the base paths (minimum of 15 feet behind baselines).

RUN RULE

In (10) player brackets (SILVER & BRONZE), if a team is behind by 11 runs or more after six (6) innings of play, the game shall be declared over by the umpire.

In the (9) player (GOLD) bracket, if a team is behind by (15) runs or more after six (6) innings of play, the game shall be declared over by the umpire.

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

JUNIORS (13-14 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

AGE LIMITS

Cannot be 15 years old before January 1st of the current year.

OFFICIAL BALL

Twelve inch (12") white or yellow (ASA) approved only.

OFFICIAL BAT

Official softball bats only. **Bats must be stamped ASA approved.** No little league (boys) or hardball bats are permitted. No exceptions.

OFFICIAL BASE

All teams must use orange and white first base safety bags. **Any team not using this base will be fined \$25.00 for the first offense. Any subsequent offenses will incur the \$25.00 fine and cause the coach to be suspended.**

FIELD MEASUREMENTS

- A. Bases: 60 feet
- B. Pitching distance: 40 feet from the back tip of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber.

GAME TIME LIMITS

All night games are to start at 6:30 P.M. promptly.

No inning will start after 8:30 P.M.

All day games—no inning will start after 2 hours from the beginning of the game.

No game shall start more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the game. This will be considered a forfeit unless weather is the cause of the delay. If weather delays the start or interrupts play after the game has started, then a decision to start or postpone the game is to be made 15 minutes after the delay. After 15 minutes, the umpire will make a decision whether or not to continue the game, wait another 15 minutes, or call the game. After 30 minutes there will be no further delays.

GAME LENGTH

Seven (7) innings, no overtime, except in playoffs. All games are to be played for a full regulation seven (7) innings unless as noted in the termination of the game in play (see below).

Legal game: If the home team is ahead after 3½ innings, or the visiting team is ahead after the 4th inning.

Termination of game in play: The umpire shall determine that the weather conditions or darkness shall prohibit the continuation of play. Please note: if the game is called in the middle of an inning, the score reverts back to the last inning played.

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

JUNIORS (13-14 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

NUMBER OF FIELD PLAYERS

In the second half of the season, the GOLD division will have (9) players in the field. All other divisions (SILVER & BRONZE) will have (10) players in the field.

BASERUNNING RULES

Stealing is permitted including home plate. A runner may score or advance on a catcher's overthrow.

No **lead** until after the ball has left the pitcher's hand. Each team will be given one team warning if this occurs. After the warning, players in violation will be declared out.

Coaches are not allowed to touch or push runners on base, such runners will be declared out.

Infield fly rule is in effect in this division, i.e. runners on 1st and 2nd or bases loaded with less than two (2) outs, the batter is declared out and the runners may advance at their own risk. Note: If runners advance at their own risk in an infield fly situation, any play on them is not a force out. IT IS A TAG PLAY.

Overthrow rule—runners take two (2) bases from the time of the throw (the base they are heading to plus one).

e.g. If a runner has not yet achieved 1st base at the time the ball leaves the fielder's hand, and the ball is overthrown to 1st base, the runner will be awarded 2nd base – the base they were headed to (1st) plus one (2nd base).

Dropped Third Strike—2nd half of season only in the GOLD & SILVER divisions. The dropped third strike rule will not be effect in the BRONZE division (the batter is out). If the catcher drops the third strike or the third strike bounces in the dirt before being caught (the third strike must be a clean catch), the Dropped Third Strike rule is in effect:

- a) The batter is permitted to run only if 1st base is unoccupied at the time of the pitch when there are less than 2 outs.
- b) The batter is permitted to run anytime there are 2 outs.
- c) If the bases are loaded with 2 outs, there is a force out at home plate.

Bunting is permitted. A player is considered to have “offered” at a bunt if they move the bat toward the ball or attempt to hit the ball with the bat. The bat extended over the plate while the ball is passing is not necessarily considered an attempt and may or may not be called a strike. It is at the sole discretion of the umpire whether the pitch was within the strike zone.

Continuous walks are permitted in (9) player brackets only (GOLD Division).

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

JUNIORS (13-14 YEARS) SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

PITCHING RULES

1. A pitcher must have both feet in contact with the pitching rubber, before attempting to pitch.
2. If a pitcher hits three (3) batters in a game, she will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
Note: A batter must attempt to get out of the way of the ball.
3. If a ball hits a batter after bouncing in the dirt first, it will be ruled a ball. Except in the 2nd half in the (9) player GOLD bracket — it is a hit batter. Note: A batter must attempt to get out of the way of the ball.
4. A pitcher cannot wear any white batting or fielding gloves while pitching.
5. Pitchers may not wear long-sleeve white jerseys while pitching.
6. A pitched ball that is thrown completely over the cage will be called a “dead ball” and will result in a “ball” on the batter. Runners on base will be awarded one base. If a runner is in between bases at the time that the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand, that runner will only be awarded the base they were headed to. (e.g. runner on 1st takes a lead when the ball is released. Ball goes completely over the cage and the runner simultaneously advances herself to 2nd base on a steal. That runner will only be awarded 2nd base, because the ball is considered “dead” from the time it was released from the pitcher’s hand, at which time the runner had not yet achieved 2nd base.)
7. Pitchers may pitch no more than five (5) innings, or fifteen (15) outs. A starting pitcher may be removed from the pitching position and later return to that position no more than once in a game. She may play any other position. (Any pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched. Mid-inning pitching substitutions will be considered as a complete inning pitched.)

FIELDING RULES

All infielders shall take up their positions at a greater distance from the hitter than the pitching distance, i.e. all players must play behind the pitcher until the ball is released by the pitcher.

- All outfielders (4) shall take up their positions behind the base paths (minimum of 10 feet behind the baselines).
- In the 2nd half, the GOLD division will have three (3) outfielders. All outfielders shall take up their positions behind the base paths (minimum of 15 feet behind baselines).

RUN RULE

In (10) player brackets (SILVER & BRONZE), if a team is behind by 11 runs or more after six (6) innings of play, the game shall be declared over by the umpire.

In the (9) player (GOLD) bracket, if a team is behind by (15) runs or more after six (6) innings of play, the game shall be declared over by the umpire.

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

INTERMEDIATES (15-18 YEARS)

SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

AGE LIMITS

Cannot be 19 years old before June 30th of the current year. **No player may turn 19 years old during the season.** (This extended cutoff applies only to this division.)

ELIGIBILITY

Players may NOT be rostered on any college team. No team shall carry more than five players who have turned 18 **between June 30th of the previous year, and June 30th of the current year.** (You may only carry a maximum of five (5) 18-year-old players per team).

OFFICIAL BALL

Twelve inch (12") white or yellow (ASA) approved only.

OFFICIAL BAT

Official softball bats only. **Bats must be stamped ASA approved.** No little league (boys) or hardball bats are permitted. No exceptions.

OFFICIAL BASE

All teams must use orange and white first base safety bags. **Any team not using this base will be fined \$25.00 for the first offense. Any subsequent offenses will incur the \$25.00 fine and cause the coach to be suspended.**

FIELD MEASUREMENTS

- A. Bases: 60 feet
- B. Pitching distance: 40 feet from the back tip of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber.

GAME TIME LIMITS

All night games are to start at 6:30 P.M. promptly.

No inning will start after 8:30 P.M.

All day games—no inning will start after 2 hours from the beginning of the game.

No game shall start more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the game. This will be considered a forfeit unless weather is the cause of the delay. If weather delays the start or interrupts play after the game has started, then a decision to start or postpone the game is to be made 15 minutes after the delay. After 15 minutes, the umpire will make a decision whether or not to continue the game, wait another 15 minutes, or call the game. After 30 minutes there will be no further delays.

- **Special NOTE: Since the 15-18 bracket has traditionally become a "straight-thru" division, due to the significantly lesser number of teams who register, ALL teams will play by SILVER division rules until teams are broken down into GOLD, SILVER and possibly BRONZE divisions at playoffs. These breakdowns and the subsequent Playoff format will be at the discretion of the Commissioner and the 15-18 Director(s).**

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

INTERMEDIATES (15-18 YEARS)

SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

GAME LENGTH

Seven (7) innings, no overtime, except in playoffs. All games are to be played for a full regulation seven (7) innings unless as noted in the termination of the game in play (see below).

Legal game: If the home team is ahead after 3½ innings, or the visiting team is ahead after the 4th inning.

Termination of game in play: The umpire shall determine that the weather conditions or darkness shall prohibit the continuation of play. Please note: if the game is called in the middle of an inning, the score reverts back to the last inning played.

NUMBER OF FIELD PLAYERS

Throughout the season, this division will have (10) players in the field. There will be a (10) batter limit and no continuous walks will be permitted. This rule will apply in the Playoffs and Championships as well, regardless of teams' placement into GOLD, SILVER & BRONZE.

BASERUNNING RULES

Stealing is permitted including home plate. A runner may score or advance on a catcher's overthrow.

No **lead** until after the ball has left the pitcher's hand. Each team will be given one team warning if this occurs. After the warning, players in violation will be declared out.

Coaches are not allowed to touch or push runners on base, such runners will be declared out.

Infield fly rule is in effect in this division, i.e. runners on first and second or bases loaded with less than two (2) outs, the batter is declared out and the runners advance at their own risk. Note: If runners advance at their own risk in an infield fly situation, any play on them is not a force out (TAG PLAY).

Overthrow rule—runners take two (2) bases from the time of the throw (the base they are heading to plus one).

e.g. If a runner has not yet achieved 1st base at the time the ball leaves the fielder's hand, and the ball is overthrown to 1st base, the runner will be awarded 2nd base – the base they were headed to (1st) plus one (2nd base).

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

INTERMEDIATES (15-18 YEARS)

SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

Dropped third strike is in effect in **ALL 15-18** divisions, **throughout the regular and post-seasons, regardless of the teams' placement for Playoffs.** If the catcher drops the third strike or the third strike bounces in the dirt before being caught (the third strike must be a clean catch), the Dropped Third Strike rule is in effect:

- a. The batter is permitted to run only if first base is unoccupied at the time of the pitch when there are less than 2 outs.
- b. The batter is permitted to run anytime there are 2 outs.
- c. If the bases are loaded with 2 outs, there is a force out at home plate.

Bunting is permitted. **A player is considered to have "offered" at a bunt if they move the bat toward the ball or attempt to hit the ball with the bat. The bat extended over the plate while the ball is passing is not necessarily considered an attempt and may or may not be called a strike. It is at the sole discretion of the umpire whether the pitch was within the strike zone.**

NO Continuous walks will be permitted. This rule will apply in the Playoffs and Championships as well, regardless of teams' placement into **GOLD, SILVER & BRONZE.** Since this age bracket will play by **"SILVER"** rules throughout the season, there will be no continuous walks allowed.

FIELDING RULES

- All infielders shall take up their positions at a greater distance from the hitter than the pitching distance, i.e. all players must play behind the pitcher until the ball is released by the pitcher.
- All outfielders (4) shall take up their positions behind the base paths (minimum of 10 feet behind the baselines).

RUN RULE

In (10) player brackets, if a team is behind by 11 runs or more after six (6) innings of play, the game shall be declared over by the umpire.

NEPL SOFTBALL RULES 2009

INTERMEDIATES (15-18 YEARS)

SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

PITCHING RULES

1. A pitcher must have both feet in contact with the pitching rubber, before attempting to pitch.
2. If a pitcher hits three (3) batters in a game, she will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
Note: A batter must attempt to get out of the way of the ball.
3. If a ball hits a batter after bouncing in the dirt first, it will be ruled a hit batter. Note: A batter must attempt to get out of the way of the ball.
4. A pitcher cannot wear any white batting or fielding gloves while pitching.
5. Pitchers may not wear long-sleeve white jerseys while pitching.
6. A pitched ball that is thrown completely over the cage will be ruled a “dead ball” and will result in a “ball” on the batter. Runners on base will be awarded one base. If a runner is in between bases at the time that the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand, that runner will only be awarded the base they were headed to. (e.g. runner on 1st takes a lead when the ball is released. Ball goes completely over the cage and the runner simultaneously advances herself to 2nd base on a steal. That runner will only be awarded 2nd base, because the ball is considered “dead” from the time it was released from the pitcher’s hand, at which time the runner had not yet achieved 2nd base.)
7. Pitchers may pitch unlimited innings. A starting pitcher may be removed from the pitching position and later return to that position no more than once in a game. She may play any other position. (Any pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched. Mid-inning pitching substitutions will be considered as a complete inning pitched.)

Again, please keep in mind that this Age Bracket will play a straight through schedule, based entirely on SILVER Division rules. This will be in effect throughout the regular season, Playoffs & Championships.

- **This is officially a ten (10) player bracket. Throughout the entire season, this division will have (10) players in the field.**
- **There will be a (10) batter limit.**
- **No continuous walks will be permitted at any time.**
- **Dropped Third Strike rule will be in effect throughout the entire season.**

PLAY SAFE! HAVE FUN!!!