



## Slow Pitch Rule Book





**OFFICIALLY LICENSED SOFTBALL OF THE  
AMERICAN FASTPITCH ASSOCIATION**



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## **Welcome to AFA Slow-Pitch Softball**

The American Fastpitch Association which has been in operation since 1980, welcomes you to the AFA slow-pitch program and hope you will find the AFA style of softball to be the game your team is looking for. Our experienced staff is developing the AFA game of slow-pitch where other associations have left off. We feel that we have made great strides in improving the game.

2008 was the inaugural year for AFA slow-pitch softball. Our rules committee feels they have developed the rules that will carry the game into the future. We feel we have designed this game of slow-pitch to be the best game it can be. Organizing the text in this book we have tried to place each rule under a logical heading. We hope you will find this book easy to use and useful in learning the proper way to play the AFA slow-pitch game.

## **2020 Slow Pitch Rule Book**



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### **AFA National Office**

2926 Calle Frontera, San Clemente, CA 92673  
(949) 291-8783  
info@afasoftball.com

### **AFA National Director**

Ron Gossmer - ron@afasoftball.com  
(949) 291-8783 cell

### **AFA Slow-Pitch Director**

Joey Markakis - jesusalou@yahoo.com  
2716 Messina Ct., Las Vegas, NV 89147  
(702) 873-0692  
(702) 860-7060

For more info and a current list of AFA Directors check out:  
**[www.afaslowpitch.com](http://www.afaslowpitch.com)**

### **Rule Interpretations**

Definitions of basic terms used in AFA slow-pitch softball, such as a batter, fielder, base runners, infield fly, etc., will be generally the same as defined by all major softball associations. If a determination cannot be reached during AFA play, then the Tournament Director and UIC will make a decision concerning the rule interpretation in question. In the event the Tournament Director cannot reach a decision, then they may appeal to the Area or Local Director or UIC for a decision. Should there be no AFA Director present then the Tournament Director may confer with the AFA Area Director or UIC. If none of the above is present then the Tournament Director will meet with all of the AFA officials present at the time of the appeal and reach a decision. Decisions reached in the manner explained above will be binding and final for that tournament. In no tournament will a team be awarded a favorable decision on a protest, where that team has used trickery, deception or wrongful interpretation of a rule by an Official or AFA Official Staff.

### **Player Suspension**

An Area or Local Director may issue a suspension for a maximum of one (1) year from the date of the incident. Suspensions must be recorded on official AFA player suspension forms and mailed to address listed on the official team roster by certified mail. The Board of Directors must rule any suspension, beyond one year.

### **Player Appeal of Suspension**

Player may appeal a suspension to the Area Director if a Local Director has issued the suspension or the National Slow-Pitch director if issued by the Area Director.

Appeal must be in writing and received within 20 days of the appellant receiving Notice of suspension.

The appeal must be ruled on within seven days of the receipt of the appeal. If not satisfied the appellant may appeal to the Board of Directors to be ruled on at the next regular meeting of the board.

### **Acts of Disbarment**

Submitting a check that cannot be negotiated for payment is grounds for disbarment.

Physical attack on an Official or tournament official or director of the association during, proceeding or immediately after the game will be grounds for disbarment.

Verbal abuse or threatening an Official, tournament official or director of the association will be grounds for disbarment.

Fighting, using unsportsmanlike conduct or derogatory acts that are detrimental and not in the best interest of the association.

Destruction of property or abuse of hotel or motel property or failure to pay hotel or motel bills will be grounds for disbarment.

By participating or permitting a fraudulent act to be perpetrated.

By knowingly competing with suspended or ineligible players will be grounds for disbarment.

## Definitions

The following definitions are not playing rules, but are used to clarify and define terms used within the playing rules of this book.

### **Altered Bat**

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

### **Appeal**

A play on which the Official cannot make a ruling until requested by a manager, coach, or player. The appeal cannot be made after any of the following occurs:

- A. A pitch has been thrown-legal or illegal.
- B. The pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory.
- C. The officials have left the field of play.

### **Base Coaches**

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

### **Base on Balls**

When 4 pitches in the judgment of the official did not enter the strike zone or were not legal pitches, the batter is awarded first base without liability to be put out. If the batter-runner continues towards second, it is treated as a base hit and the batter-runner may now be put out.

### **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. 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 their possession shall be declared out.

### **Base Runner**

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**

Offensive player whose turn it is to take a position in either batter's box to receive a pitch.

### **Batter's Box**

The area to which the batter is restricted when batting. The batter must have both feet entirely within the lines of the box prior to the pitch. The lines are considered to be within the batters box.

**Batter-Runner**

The offensive player who started in the batters' box, but has left it in an attempt to reach base safely.

**Batting Order**

The official list of starting offensive players presented in the order in which they are to bat and recorded on a line-up card. Batting out of order is an appeal that can only be made by the offended team.

**Blocked Ball**

A live batted or thrown ball that (1.) Contacts non-game personnel, game personnel in unauthorized areas, loose equipment or an object that is neither official game equipment nor part of the official playing area; or (2.) Crosses into dead-ball area. If a live ball strikes a base coach unintentionally, it is not a blocked ball and remains live. Offensive equipment that causes a blocked ball, the runner closest to home plate will be declared out and all other runners will return to the last base touched when the ball became blocked.

**Bunt/Bunt Attempt**

Not legal in slow-pitch. Ball is dead and batter is out.

**Catch**

The act of a fielder who, with their hand(s) and/or glove/mitt, securely gains possession of a batted, pitched or thrown ball. In establishing the validity of the catch, the fielder must hold the ball long enough to prove control is maintained and that release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If the fielder has made the catch but drops the ball either in transferring it to the throwing hand or in making the throw, the ball shall be ruled caught. A fielder must have secure possession of the ball before stepping, touching or falling into a dead-ball area. A fielder who catches a ball while contacting or stepping on a collapsible fence while the fence is vertical is credited with a catch.

**A catch shall not be credited if:**

- A. Fielder catches a batted, pitched or thrown ball with anything other than their hand(s) or glove/mitt in its proper place.
- B. Immediately following a catch, the fielder collides with another player, Official or fence or falls to the ground and fails to maintain possession of the ball.
- C. Fielder uses any equipment or part of their uniform that is displaced from its proper position.
- D. BOTH feet are touching dead-ball area at time of catch.
- E. The ball strikes anything or anyone other than defensive player while it is in flight. NOTE: in this case the ball is ruled a ground ball.
- F. A collapsible fence is falling to or on the ground when a fielder contacts the ball.
- G. The fielder traps the ball. A batted fly ball or line-drive is considered trapped if it hits the ground or a fence on a short hop before being caught. A thrown ball is considered trapped if it is on the ground and the glove/mitt 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 players' equipment (provided that it's in its proper place) shall not be ruled caught until the ball is securely held in the players' hand(s) or glove/mitt.

### **Catcher**

Defensive player to whom the pitcher throws when pitching to a batter. Catcher must be in the catcher's box in order to receive a pitch and is the only player who can and must be positioned in foul territory at the time of the pitch.

### **Catcher-Box**

The area in which the catcher and all his/her equipment must be within until the ball is released by the pitcher. An illegal pitch is called if the catcher is not in this position.

### **Conference**

A charged conference is when:

**Offensive;** Offensive team requests a suspension of play for any reason to allow the coach/manager or other team representative (not on the field) to confer with the batter or base runner.

**Defensive;** Defensive team request a suspension of play for any reason, and a representative (not on the field) enters the playing field and (by any means) delivers a message to any defensive player. It is not a conference when the pitcher is removed or an injury time out.

### **Courtesy Runner**

Player allowed to run for an offensive player who is on base. Anyone can be used, however, the courtesy runner cannot be removed until they score or are put out by the defense, unless injured. If the courtesy runner is caught on base when their turn at bat comes up, they will be declared out.

### **Dead Ball**

A ball that is not in play and does not become live again until the pitcher holds it on the pitchers plate and the Official call/signals "Player/Play ball"

### **Dead Ball Territory**

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

### **Delayed Dead Ball**

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

### **Ejection**

The exercise of an Officials' authority to remove a player and/or other team personnel from further participation in a game. This requires the player/coach to leave the grounds (sight and sound) for the remainder of the game. Any ejected player/coach discovered participating will constitute a forfeit. Ejected player/coach maybe required to sit out the next game.



**Fair Ball**

A fair ball is a legally batted ball that:

- A. Settles on or is touched on or over fair territory between home and first or home and third.
- B. is on or over fair territory, including any part of first or third bases when bounding toward the outfield or touches first, second or third bases.
- C. Falls in fair territory beyond first or third base.

NOTE: A foul fly, line drive or grounder shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole.

**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 slow down or stop. The runner does not have to stop or slide, merely slowing down would constitute obstruction.

**Foul Ball**

A legally batted ball that:

Settles on or is touched on or over foul territory between home and first or home and third.

- A. Bounds past first or third on or over foul territory.
- B. While in flight, falls or touches an official or player in foul territory and is not caught.
- C. Touches the batter while still in the batters' box after having swung and the ball bounces from the ground to the batter.
- D. Touches the bat in the batters hand while still in the batters' box.

NOTE: A foul fly, line drive or grounder shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole.

**Illegal Bat**

A bat that does not meet acceptable specifications (particular weight, length, barrel diameter, material limits) as set forth in the equipment sect.

**Illegally Batted Ball**

A pitch contacted by the batter:

- 1. With an altered bat.
- 2. With an illegal bat.
- 3. When any part of either foot is in contact with the plate at the time of bat-ball contact.
- 4. When one or both feet are on the ground and entirely outside the lines of the batters' box at the time of the bat-ball contact.
- 5. A pitched ball that hits the ground and is hit by the batter.

**Illegally Caught Ball**

When a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with their cap, illegal glove or any part of the uniform or equipment detached from its proper place.

**Illegal Player**

A player who participates in a game after having been declared ineligible due to ejection or illegal substitution or not on roster.

**Illegal Re-Entry**

A violation of the substitution rule that occurs when an illegal player (one who is not entitled to play) is put back into the game or a legal returns to the game, but not in the original position in the batting order.

**Infield Fly**

A fair fly ball (not a line drive) that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when all three bases are occupied or runners are on first and second 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 runners may tag-up and advance as soon as a fielder touches the batted ball.

**Interference**

The act of an offensive player, coach, official, or spectator that denies the defensive player to a reasonable opportunity to play the ball. The act may be intentional or unintentional and ball must have been playable. If judged by the official, vocal interference may called.

**Lineup Card**

The card that contains the first and last names, uniform numbers, if worn of all starting players, listed in the order they are to bat, and the first and last names and uniform numbers, if worn of all eligible substitutes.

**Obstruction**

The act of a defensive player who:

1. Hinders or prevents a batter from hitting the ball
2. A fielder who while not in possession of the ball or not in the act of fielding a batted ball, obstructs a base runner from advancing to the next base.

**Over-slide**

The act of a base-runner who, when sliding, loses contact with a base or passes it. Over-sliding/overrunning first base is legal. The batter-runner can turn left or right but must not make an attempt toward second, must return immediately to first base. If an attempt is made, the runner is now liable to be put out.

**Overthrow**

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

**Pinch Hitter**

A player who is inserted in the lineup in the place of a batter. The pinch hitter will stay in the lineup until replaced by the original player or another substitute.

**Pinch Runner**

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

**Quick Pitch**

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

**Steal**

When a runner advances upon the pitch hitting the ground, home plate, or crossing the plate with no swing from the batter. The runner must wait to leave until one of the above has happened.

**Strike Zone**

The area above home plate which is between the top of the batters' back shoulder and the bottom of the batters' front knee when a natural batting stance is assumed. The position of the batter in the batters' box is irrelevant when calling a strike.

**Strike**

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

**Three Foot Line**

A line parallel to and three feet from the base line. Starting at a point halfway between home plate and first base. The batter runner is declared out when they run outside the three foot line, and in the judgment of the official, interferes with the fielder attempting to field a batted or thrown ball.

**Time**

A term used by the official to suspend play. The ball is dead, until the official indicates a resumption of play.

**Unsportsmanlike Act or Conduct**

Any action (verbal or physical) made by coaches, players, team members, spectators made toward officials or opposing coaches, players team members, or other spectators. This will include making disparaging or insulting remarks, threatening physical harm, fighting or throwing objects.

PENALTY: a warning need not be given. If warranted, the coach, player, team member or spectator will be removed from the complex for the remainder of the game and/or tournament. Failure to comply will result in forfeiture of the game.

## **General AFA Slow-Pitch Rules**

### **OFFICIALS**

#### **Section 1 - Duties**

One or more officials shall be appointed to officiate each AFA game. They shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with the rules within this book and for maintaining discipline and order upon the playing field during the game. Each official as a representative of AFA, is authorized and required to enforce all of the following rules. They have the authority to order players, coaches, captains, or managers to carry out, or omit any act which in their judgment, is necessary to give force and effect to any of these rules.

#### **Section 2 - Uniform**

The official shall wear an AFA approved uniform consisting of the following:

1. Official grey pull over, collared shirt.
2. Official black hat.
3. White socks with black shorts with belt loops, or black socks with black dress pants, with belt loops, polyester, no pleats.
4. Ball bags shall be black.
5. Black Belt.
6. Black jacket, pullover, or approved sweatshirt with AFA logo.
7. Shoes must be black approved official shoes that can be polished.
8. Sliding shorts or compression shorts, if worn, must be black.
9. Under no circumstances are sweat pants or any type of athletic pant approved, or to be worn while umpiring.

#### **Section 3 - Plate Official (Official-in-charge)**

If two or more officials are officiating a game, the plate official has jurisdiction over any rule matters not covered and not assigned to the base official. The plate official shall inspect equipment and field conditions, receive batting order of both teams, and call "PLAY" to start the game. The plate official shall call the game if conditions warrant, penalize for any rule infractions such as interference, obstruction, delay of game, unwarranted disputing of a decision or unsportsmanlike conduct. The plate official shall make the final decision of points not covered by the rules of the game. The plate official shall forfeit the game for any prescribed infraction by spectators, participants or attendants.

#### **Section 4 - Base Official**

The base official shall take position as prescribed by AFA mechanics. Assist the official-in-charge in administering the rules of the game, per the pre-game conference. The base Official shall call all plays on the bases in accordance with the official-in-charge, in granting time, and assist the plate official in every way to enforce the rules of the game.

#### **Section 5 - Decisions**

NO official has the authority to set aside or question decisions made by another official within the limits of their respective duties as outlined in these guidelines. An official may consult with an associate(s) however, the final decision will rest with the official whose exclusive authority it is to make the decision and who

requests the opinion of the other official(s).

### **Section 6 - Change of Officials**

Teams may not request a change of official during a game.

### **Section 7 - Official Judgment**

Decisions may not be appealed on official judgment calls, including, but not limited to:

- A. Any decision of an appeal play.
- B. Any decision of a ball or strike.
- C. That a batted ball was fair or foul.
- D. That a runner was safe or out.
- E. When a game is called for darkness, rain, panic or other reasons.

**Note:** No decisions of any official will be reversed involving only judgment, except when convinced it was in violation of one of these rules. The reversal and final decision could come after conferring with associates as a result of that Officials own requested conference.

### **Section 8 - Authority**

The official-in-charge, may rectify any situation in which the reversal of an officials decision or delay called by an official places a batter-runner, a runner or defensive team in jeopardy. This correction is not possible after a pitch has been thrown, or after the defensive team infielders and pitcher have left the field of play.

### **Section 9 - Appeal Play**

A play on which an official may not make a decision until requested by a manager, coach or player. The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch, or before the pitcher and all infielders have vacated the playing field and have left fair territory. On the last play of the game, an appeal can be made until the officials leave the field of play. Appeals must be made with a live ball. Either before the official grants time, or after the ball s put back into play by the official, due to the pitcher taking the pitching position. The pitcher may then remain in contact with or step off the pitching path when making the announcement as to which runner and base is being appealed. The ball may be thrown or carried to the runner or base in question, and a tag of either made before a decision is rendered.

- Note::**
- A. The defensive team has only one attempted appeal per runner
  - B. All runners may advance on an appeal play at their own risk
  - C. A ball thrown into dead ball area, forfeits the defenses right to any further appeal of the play
  - D. When an appeal is made during a dead ball, the official shall inform the teams "TIME IS OUT"

## **PROTESTS**

### **There are three types of protests:**

1. Misinterpretation of a playing rule - must be made before the next pitch, or if on the last play of the game, before the Officials leave the playing field.
2. Illegal substitute or re-entry must be made while they are in the game, and

- before the officials leave the playing field.
3. Ineligible player can be made anytime. Protested players must produce either a picture I.D. or two forms of legal I.D. (social security card, voter's registration and/or credit cards). At the time of protest should the protested player be unable to produce valid I.D. within 5 minutes, the protests shall be upheld.

### **Protest Not To Be Considered**

Protests will not be received or considered if they are based solely on a decision of the accuracy of a judgment call by the official.

### **Protest Procedure**

- A. The manager, acting manager, or coach of the protesting team shall immediately notify the plate Official that the game is being played under protest. The plate Official shall in turn notify the opposing manager and official scorekeeper.
- B. To aid in the correct determination of the issue, all interested parties shall take notice of the information, details and conditions surrounding the decision to protest.
- C. Protest fee will be put up by the protesting team. The amount will be equal to the tournament entry fee in cash and or check. Fees will be returned if the protest is upheld.

### **Written Protest**

The official written protest must be filed within a reasonable time. In the absence of a league or tournament rule establishing the time limit for filing a protest, a protest should be considered if filed within a reasonable time, depending upon the nature of the call, and the difficulty of obtaining the information relevant to the protest.

### **Written Protest Procedure**

The written protest should contain the following information:

1. The date, time and place of the game
2. The names of the Officials and or any scorers
3. The information, details and conditions pertinent to the decision to protest
4. All essential facts involved in the protest

### **Protest Decision**

The decision rendered on a protested game must result in one of the following:

- A. The protest is considered to be invalid and the game score stands as played.
- B. When a protest is determined to be valid because of the misinterpretation of a playing rule, the decision will be corrected, and the game shall be replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made.
- C. When a protest for ineligibility is determined to be valid, the offending team shall forfeit the game being played, or the game last played to the offended team.
- D. In Tournament play, when an ineligible player is discovered during the game, the offending team shall forfeit the game, be ejected from the tournament, and placed last in the standings. If the ineligible player is discov-

ered after the game, but before the next scheduled game for either team, the same penalties as above apply and the proper team will be placed in the bracket. If the next scheduled game, for either team has begun, the game shall stand as played, but the offending team shall be ejected from the tournament and placed last in the standings.

## **TEAM CLASSIFICATIONS**

In order to insure that all teams playing AFA Slow-Pitch softball can play without fear of being classified unfairly by an Area or Local Director, teams may play in whatever team classification they desire, provided they adhere to the following rules and conditions of classifications.

### **Conditions**

- A. No team will be allowed to classify itself lower than the highest equivalent AFA Classification it plays with another softball association recognized by and in good standing with the AFA, without special permission of the AFA Area Director.
- B. If a team is not sanctioned or classified by another recognized softball association, then it will be classified by an AFA director.
- C. If a team enters an AFA tournament, and during or after playing, the AFA state, area or tournament director decides it should be classified higher or finds out that the team plays in a higher classification with another softball association, then the AFA reserves the right to:
  - 1. Make that team forfeit all games, and keep it's entry fee, or
  - 2. Give that team a State, National, or World berth in the classification it should be playing in, but that team forfeits all awards and/or prizes being awarded in the tournament it played in illegally.
- D. If a team is moved to a different class by another softball association during the season, AFA reserves the right to move that team to a higher or lower classification whether classified or not.
- E. The AFA reserves the right to move a team to a higher or lower classification at anytime whether qualified or not, if a team has lost or added players to/from their roster, which the AFA feels would change classification.
- F. A team's home state is determined to be the state from which the greatest amount of players listed on the official roster legally reside. Teams must sanction with that state and follow all conditions of team classification.
- G. All teams sanctioning with AFA will also agree to pay all legal expenses incurred by the AFA for defense of any lawsuit brought against the AFA or any AFA director, for enforcing conditions listed above should the AFA win the lawsuit brought by any team, team member, coach manager or sponsor.
- H. Each Area Director will have the right to make the final decision as to the classification of teams in their state.
- I. All teams playing AFA sanctioned play, will agree to all conditions (A-H) pertaining to classifications under penalty of immediate forfeit upon violation of any conditions listed in A-H.

### **Home Run Limit**

Teams will not be allowed to exceed the home run limit as set forth for each classification. (See home run chart for limit and penalty in each classification).

### **Player Eligibility**

Players must be at least 18 years of age to play adult AFA sanctioned slow-pitch softball. Exception to this will be if minor player in question provides the AFA signed release agreeing to hold harmless AFA and all people and/or organizations holding the tournament in the event of an injury to the minor in question, sustained while playing AFA sanctioned ball. This releases must be signed by either the parents of the minor in question, or a legal guardian as appointed by legal court of law. In additions to signatures of the parents or guardians, the form must be signed and notarized by a licensed Notary Public.

No one under 16 years will be allowed to participate in the adult program. Minors not turning 16 years of age by August 1st of the current year will be ineligible for any adult play.

Youth teams are restricted from participation in the adult program.

**EXCEPTION:** Teams consisting of players 16 years of age or older must conform to the above rules and guidelines.

Youth teams must re-sanction as an adult team in the appropriate classification.

### **Team Move Up Policy**

Teams which win a World or National Championship may be required to move up to the next higher classification if those teams retain as many as 4 players from that previous championship team regardless of whether the teams play under the same sponsor or team name. Any other team with as many as 4 players from that previous championship team may also be required to play in a higher classification. This will apply to all teams playing open Class B and below and all specialty programs.

### **Team Changing Classification**

A team may change it's classification during the season, provided it adheres to the following criteria:

- A. Does not violate any other rules pertaining to team classification.
- B. Pays the applicable fee to the AFA for changing it's classification.
- C. Fills out necessary form for changing classification.
- D. Has not already won and accepted a State, National, or World berth in a higher classification.
- E. Has the consent or permission of it's Area Director.

### **Teams may qualify**

Teams may qualify to play in State, National, or World championship play in each division, if all rules are adhered to.

### **Teams Entering Out of State Tournament**

Teams entering an out of state tournament must sanction with their Local director prior to playing in the tournament. Teams without a Local director must sanction with the Area director or the AFA National Office.

### **American Disability Act of 1980**

- A. This rule may be used for a physically challenged player as determined by the American Disabilities Act of July 25, 1980. As a result of the player's



- disability, the player can play either offense or defense.
- B. When a physically challenged person plays offense only, the team will follow the EP rules as written. There would be 11/12 hitters including the ADA player.
  - C. When a physically challenged person plays defense only, they will be listed as a DEFO and placed last in the lineup. The team has the option to bat 10 or 11/12 players (if the EP is also used). When using a DEFO, it must be made known prior to the start of the game.
  - D. If a team starts the game with the DEFO option, the DEFO can never play offense. If this person for any reason cannot continue to play and the team has no other physically challenged player for a substitute, the EP can now play their defensive position. The DEFO position has the same re-entry status as any other position as long as the person substituted is also determined to be physically challenged under the ADA program. The DEFO may only re-enter in the same lineup spot on the lineup card.

**NOTE:** This special rule has been adopted to accommodate the athlete who is physically challenged. The intent is not to change the game and/or not to deprive any player from playing who would normally play, therefore, when using the EP, the normal EP rules will be followed including substitutions and re-entry. If the EP is used in addition to the DEFO, the DEFO must play defense and any of the other 11/12 players will be eligible to play defense. Only 11/12 are allowed to bat.

### **Team Roster Rule**

AFA team rosters will be limited to 22 players. 28 for Co-Ed, per season. Until the state tournament, players may be added onto team rosters, as long as that team does not exceed its player limit. Players being added must be approved by the Area Director and cannot have played with a team of higher classification during the year. Coaches and managers should not be listed on the roster.

Once a team has started or played its first game during an AFA tournament, that team will not be allowed to add additional players to its roster for the rest of that tournament.

Players who actually play with a team that qualifies for State, National, or World berth, will be frozen to that team roster in all classes of play for the rest of the season.

No player already froze on a roster will be allowed to be added to another team's roster unless a player released is submitted and approved by the Area Director.

Any player already froze to a roster and caught playing on another roster may be suspended regardless of the classification being played.

Players may be released from a roster of a qualified team only under the following circumstances:

1. The qualified team disbands, and official notice of the disbanding is given to the AFA by the team's manager or sponsor.
2. The qualified team's coach, manager or sponsor gives official written notice to AFA that it is not going to accept its State, National, or World berth.
3. An Official Player Release Form is filled out, signed by both the player and the team manager. It is then turned into the Area Director for approval.

NOTE: If a team releases a player they may not replace that player with another if it has already reached its limit. No player released from a team can come back to that team during the season.

4. If a team does not send entry fee by deadline to any State, National or World tournament the player of that team may be added to another team's roster as long as all roster rules are adhered to.

Names of players on qualified team's roster cannot be deleted or replaced by other player's names unless there is no signature by that name, in which case the player's name will not count against that team's roster limit.

Teams must turn in a roster each tournament.

Player roster limits begin with the roster which is turned in at the tournament where the team qualified for State, National, or World Berth.

Any team caught playing in an AFA tournament without turning in a completely filled out and signed roster will forfeit that game as well as its entry fee.

Any team caught turning in a roster with forged signatures on official roster, may be suspended from AFA sanctioned play for the remainder of the season.

Any player caught playing in an AFA tournament without signing an Official Roster may be suspended from playing AFA for the remainder of the season.

Upon completion of the State tournament, teams will be allowed to add 2 players to a frozen team World Tournament Roster. These additions must be approved by the Area Director and may not exceed the roster limitations.

Any player listed on a major player list or watch list will not be able to play on any C, D or E division team.

Teams may always play up a division but never play down lower than their established division of play.

A, B and C ranked female(s) may be allowed to play on a men's team in tournament play only with directors prior knowledge and approval.

## **Rule 1 - Playing Field Dimensions**

For an example of the playing field, refer to the Official Diamond Drawing, showing dimensions. These drawings serve as an example for laying out a playing field. NOTE: If the base distances or the pitching distance is found to be at the wrong dimensions during the course of the game, correct the error with no penalty, and continue playing the game. Every effort should be made by the Official to obtain the correct dimensions.

**Base Path:** an imaginary line, three feet on either side of a direct line between bases, or of a runner running toward any base.

**Catchers Box:** The area defined by the lines, which are considered within the box. The catcher's body and equipment are considered inside the box unless touching the ground outside the box. The catcher must remain in the box unless the pitched ball is batted, touches the ground or plate, or passes home plate.

**Double Base or Safety Base:** A double or safety base is not mandatory, but if used the following guidelines will apply: The double base must be placed so that the white portion is where first base normally would be (fair territory) and the colored portion is in foul territory. A batter-runner must touch the colored portion and the defensive player must touch the white portion of the base on the initial play. Exception: If the throw takes the defensive player into the running lane, the batter-runner may touch the white portion to avoid a collision. The defensive may never use the colored portion to make a play. On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield when there is no play being made at the double base, the batter-runner may touch the white or orange portion. Should the batter-runner return, the runner must return to the white portion. Once a batter-runner is safe at 1st the colored portion of the base may not be used by the runner.

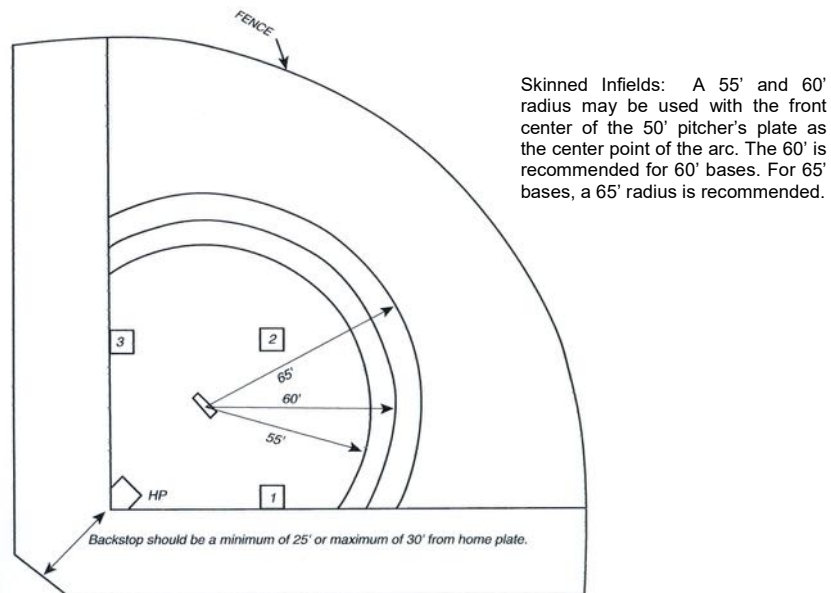
**Fair Territory:** The area inside and including the foul lines and foul poles, where the ball is playable by a fielder.

**Foul Territory:** The area outside the foul lines and poles, where the ball is playable by a fielder.

**Ground Rules:** Special conditions/boundaries/obstructions within the prescribed playing area which shall be noted and agreed upon by opposing teams/tournament directors and leagues. Obstructions on fair grounds less than the prescribed fence distances should be clearly marked for the teams and the officials.

**Infield:** The area in fair territory of the field normally covered by the infielders.

**Outfield:** The area in fair territory of the field normally covered by the outfielders.





## **Rule 2 - Playing Equipment**

### **Section A - Bats**

1. Shall be wood, metal graphite, carbon, magnesium, fiberglass, or any composite material approved by AFA. Any new bat must be reviewed and approved by the AFA prior to use. All non-wood bats must meet a 1.2 or less bat performance factor as measured using the ASTM Standard 1890 test for softball bat performance factor with the following conditions: Bats will be tested at three sports at distance two inches apart from the center of percussion.
2. A laminate bat must contain only wood or adhesive and have a clear finish, if applied to it.
3. Shall be smooth whether round or three sided. If the barrel end has a knurled finish, the maximum surface roughness is no more than 250 if measured by a porfilometer, or 4/1000 if measured by a spectrograph.
4. Shall not be more than 34 inches long, nor exceed 38 ounces in weight.
5. If round, shall not be more than 2 1/4" in diameter at the largest part, and if three sided not exceed 2 1/4" on the hitting surface. A tolerance of 1/32" is permitted to allow for expansion on a round bat.
6. Shall have a safety grip of cork, tape (no smooth plastic tape), or composition material. The safety grip shall not exceed more than 15" from the knob end of the bat and will be no less than 10". Any molded finger-formed grip made by the bat manufacturer, if used must be permanently attached to the bat or attached to the bat with safety tape and must be approved by the AFA. Resin, pine tar or spray substances used on the bat grip to enhance the grip is permissible on grip only. Tape applied to grip of any bat must be continuously spiral. It does not have to be a solid layer.
7. Shall have a safety knob of a minimum of 1/4" protruding at a 90 degree angle from the handle. It may be molded, lathed, welded or permanently fastened. A flare or cone grip attached to the bat will be considered illegal. The knob may be taped if no violation of this section.
8. Shall be marked Official Softball by the manufacturer. If the words Official Softball cannot be read due to wear and tear on the bat, but it is legal in all other respects, it should be declared legal. Bats used in AFA play must be pre-approved by the AFA National Office.
9. Senior Bats may only be used for Senior play.

### **Section B - Altered Bat Policy**

1. Any player using an altered bat in AFA sanction play, either knowingly or unknowingly, will be automatically ejected from the game in which the altered bat was used and they may receive a suspension from the date of the infraction. If the player refuses to release the bat to the AFA for testing the player may be banned from the AFA.
2. In addition to the player penalty, the team will forfeit the game and may be ejected from the tournament, by placing last in the standings and forfeit the right to any awards or berths attained at that event. In league play the team will forfeit the game and additional penalties will be at the discretion of the league director or board.
3. Altered bats are bats that have been cosmetically changed in such a manner to mask the true identity of the bat; have been changed in any way from the original manufactured product such as plug removed, end load

changed, walls thinned or has anything foreign added to the bat other than a legal safety grip device or tape at the handle.

4. Bats that have been worn due to normal usage but still retain the legal markings are approved for usage as long as the appropriate marks are legible.
5. Cracked or damaged bats that cannot be identified are not altered bats but shall be removed from play by official or director. A player returning a removed but not altered bat shall receive the same penalty as if using an altered bat.
6. Any player accused of using an altered bat must voluntarily allow the bat inspection by the AFA director or by any means determined acceptable by the AFA this includes returning the bat to the manufacturer for testing and determination. The player and team will remain eligible until the date of determination. Any time a player is struck with a batted ball directly, the bat and the ball may be taken. Once the bat is taken from the player, the director may remove the tape or rubber grip on the handle, and mark down any ID number stamped by the manufacturer and give it to the player for receipt. The bat will be tagged and sent in for testing.

### **Section C - Warm Up Bat**

The warm-up bat shall meet the requirements and be approved by the AFA National Office. Weighted sleeves and fans are approved. Weighted donuts are not approved.

### **Section D - The Official Softball**

1. Shall be regular, smoothed seamed, flat-surfaced, pebble textured or dimple textured ball with concealed stitches.
2. The core will be made of either #1 quality long fiber kapok, mixture of cork and rubber, polyurethane mixture or any material approved by the AFA National Office.
3. Shall be 12" SP in Men's play. The 11" SP may be used in Co-Ed for women or women's play and must be white or optic yellow with any color thread and approved by the AFA National Office.
4. 52 core, 300 compression.
5. May have a cover of synthetic material or leather. Any other material must be approved by the AFA National Office.

### **Section E - Gloves**

Gloves may be worn by any fielder, but mitts, may be used only by the catcher or first baseman. No top lacing, webbing or other device between the thumb and body of the glove or mitt may be used by any fielder. The pitcher will not use any glove that resembles or appears to be, in any way, the same color of the ball being used.

A fielder's glove will be made of leather or any material approved by the AFA National Office and of the same size, weight and design requirements approved by other major softball associations.

Wrist guards may be laced into the glove to protect infielders from bounced balls through the infield.

### **Section F - Uniforms**

Uniforms are recommended, but not required. Uniform will be changed if found to have exposed blood on it.

1. Shoes: Must be worn by all players. The shoe must have a sole of either smooth or soft or hard rubber cleats, or the all purpose molded cleat shoe. NO METAL SPIKES or CLEATS will be allowed.
2. Jewelry: Exposed jewelry, judged by the Official to be a hazard may not be worn during the game.
3. No hard substances in their final form such as plaster casts may be worn during the game.

### **Section G - All Equipment**

The AFA reserves the right to withhold or withdraw approval of any equipment which significantly changes the character of the game, affects the safety of participants or spectators and renders players performance more a product of equipment rather than individual skill.

## **Rule 3 - Players and Substitutes**

### **Section 1 - Teams**

- A. A team must have the required number of players present in the team area to start or continue a game. Line up cards are to be presented to the scorekeeper or official at the start of each game. All available substitutes will be listed on the official lineup. Eligible roster members may be added to the lineup at anytime as substitutes.
- B. Male rosters may only contain male players. Female rosters may only contain females.
- C. A coach is a member of the team at bat who takes a position within one of the coaches boxes on the field to direct the players in running the bases. Only one coach per box.
- D. If a team starts with 10, 11 or 12 players in the lineup and player(s) are lost through injury, ejected, or leave the game for any reason, the team may continue with 9 players in the lineup. An out will be declared whenever the missing player's turn at bat comes around.

**NOTE:** An out will not be declared if the batter immediately preceding in the batting order is walked, whether intentional or not. The slot will be skipped and the following batter shall take their turn at bat.

- E. If the player leaving the game for any reason is a runner, an out will be declared if there is no replacement for the runner and the courtesy runner has been used.
- F. A player that has left the game for the blood rule may return to the game. A player leaving the game for any other reason may not return to the game unless eligible for re-entry. Effect: The game is forfeited for any violation of requirements.
- G. Under no circumstances, will a team be allowed to play with less than 9 players.
- H. If a team does not have 10 players or more at game time, that team may start with 9 players, of which one must be a pitcher, and another the

catcher. All other positions will be as desired.

**NOTE:** No out will be declared for a missing player in the batting lineup when a team starts with 9 players; the 10th player may be added to the defensive lineup immediately when arriving and will be placed in the 10th spot in the batting order.

### **Section 2 - Additional Player**

The use of additional players is allowed. One or two additional players (AP) is optional, but if used they must be announced prior to the start of the game and be listed on the lineup card.

When an AP is used all players on the lineup card must bat, and only 10 players are allowed to take the field for defense. Defensive positions may be changed at any time with additional players, without announcing to the official. Batting positions must remain the same throughout the game.

### **Section 3 - Re-Entry**

All players may re-enter the game one time.

Violation of the Re-entry rule is handled as a protest when brought to the attention of the official by the offended team, and may be made any time during the game. The protest need not be made before the next pitch. **EFFECT:** The illegal player is ejected and all play that occurred while they were in the game will stand.

A player removed from the pitching position by the official and substituted for, can re-enter the game at any other position but cannot return to the pitching position. Note: If an illegal pitcher returns to the pitching position and throws one pitch, they are ejected from the game. This is not considered a re-entry violation.

### **Section 4 - Substitutions**

A substitute may take the place of a player whose name is in the teams batting order. The manager of the team making the substitute must notify the official immediately when making the substitution. The following regulations govern the substitutions of players.

If not reported, the substitute will be considered in the game when:

1. A batter takes position in the box.
2. A fielder takes the place of a fielder substituted for.
3. The base runner takes position on the base.
4. Once a pitcher delivers a practice pitch from the pitcher plate.

Whether a substitute is announced or not, by assuming one of the above conditions they are considered a legal player and have entered the lineup.

### **Section 5 - Courtesy Runner**

Any eligible player on the official line up including substitutes may be used as a courtesy runner. Definition: an eligible player is a rostered player, any rostered player not ejected and or disqualified from the game may still be used as a courtesy runner.

1. Can only be used once per half inning.



2. Must be put out, finish the inning or score. The original runner or substitute cannot re-enter for the courtesy runner. Exception: Should an injury or disqualification occur and no substitutes are available, the courtesy runner must be used as a substitute and take the place of the injured player. Should the courtesy runner be on base and is entered as a substitute, the person for who the courtesy runner is running for must run in their place. (se rule 3 section 1 F)

### **Section 6 - Ejected Player**

A player, manager or coach who has been asked to leave the playing area by the official. Any ejected player discovered in the game participation, will constitute a forfeit.

### **Section 7 - Blood Rule**

Any participant in the game, who is bleeding or who has blood on their uniform shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment has been received. If the treatment is administered in a reasonable amount of time they will not have to leave the game. The length of time that is considered reasonable is determined by the official. The official will:

- A. Stop the game and allow treatment if the injured player would affect the continuation of the game.
- B. Uniform needs to be changed if found to have exposed blood on it.
- C. Immediately call an authorized person of the team to the injured player
- D. Apply the rules of the game regarding substitution, shorthanded player, or re-entry if necessary.
- E. The clock will stop if timed game.

## **Rule 4 - The Game**

**Note: The ball and strike count will adhere to the following:**

- A. AFA has a (4) ball and three (3) strikes. Effect: the batter is out, and the ball is dead on the first foul ball after two (2) strikes.

### **Section 1 - Home Team**

The team designated as home team shall bat last in the inning.

### **Section 2 - Fitness of Grounds**

The fitness of the grounds will be decided by the plate official and director.

### **Section 3 - Time**

- A. After a batted ball or an unintentional walk, when the ball is in possession of the pitcher within the baselines and all play ceases, the official shall call time.
- B. Any injury that the official in his opinion, feels that needs immediate attention, the official shall call “**Dead Ball**”, and allow or seek aid, Any runners will be allowed the base they would of reached in the official's judgment.
- C. Time may be called when a live ball has been touched by someone not in the game or touches any object that is not part of the official game

equipment or playing area. The official may call time for any blocked ball.

#### **Section 4 - Official Regulation Game**

- A. Inning: That portion of the game in which the teams alternate defensive positions and when there is three outs for each team. A new inning begins immediately after the final out of the previous inning.
- B. A regulation game shall consist of seven innings in National Play. A full seven innings need not be played if the home team scores more runs in the six and one half innings and/or before the third of the seventh inning.
- C. In the event of inclement weather, AFA tournament directors have the right to shorten the game to five innings of play provided the teams are notified prior to starting the game.
- D. A predetermined run rule in AFA will award a win to a team in all games, as follows: For Class B and below the team ahead by 20 or more runs after 3 complete innings of play, 15 or more after 4, 10 after 5 complete innings.
- E. Tournament games that are not considered regulation shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped.
- F. A game called by an official shall be regulation if four or more complete innings have been played, or if the home team has scored more runs in 3 1/2 or more innings. The official is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic, or other causes which place the patrons or players in peril.
- G. A regulation tied game shall be declared if the score is equal when game is called at the end of four or more complete innings, or if the home team has equaled the score of the first team at bat in the incomplete innings.
- H. Games that are regulation tie games shall be resumed at the exact same spot as where they were stopped.
- I. A tournament director has the right to impose time limits on all tournaments that are not considered National Tournaments. They must announce the format and time limit before the start of the tournament. No game will be less than 55 minutes unless conditions warrant a shorter game as listed above.

#### **Section 5 - Extra Innings and Tie Breaker**

If after completion of seven innings of play, or the end of time in a timed game, the score is tied the following will take place.

- A. Starting with the top of the eighth or the top of the next inning when time has expired, and each half inning following, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the last player to have completed a turn at bat, being placed on second base.
- B. Teams will continue playing additional innings until one side is ahead in runs at that end of a complete inning or until the home team has scored more runs in their half inning of play.
- C. No game may end in a tie unless it is for pool play or seeding game only.
- D. A sub/courtesy runner may be used at anytime.

#### **Section 6 - Forfeit Game**

A forfeited game shall be declared by the Official in favor of the team not at fault for the following reasons:

- A. If the Official is physically attacked by any team member and/or spectator.

- B. If a team fails to appear on the field, or being on the field, refuses to begin a game for which it is scheduled or assigned with a time set for forfeitures by the association which the team represents.
- C. If one side refuses to continue to play after the game has begun, unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the official.
- D. If after play has been suspended by the official, one side fails to resume playing within two minutes after “**Play Ball**” has been announced by the official after consultation with the tournament or league director if available.
- E. If a team employs tactics noticeably designed to delay or to hasten the game.
- F. If after warning by the official, any one of the rules of the game is willfully violated.
- G. If the order for the ejection of a player is not obeyed within one minute.
- H. If the ejection of a player or players from the game results in fewer than the required number of players to continue the game.
- I. AFA tournament directors and/or officials may declare a forfeit in the following case:  
Unsportsmanlike conduct by any team, team member or fans of the team. Officials shall warn the offending team to control the actions of its fans. If the team is unable to do so, then the official can declare the forfeit.
- J. AFA tournament directors may allow a grace period of up to 15 minutes before declaring a forfeit during the first completed round of play, if deemed necessary. After the first round of play has been completed, whether play or forfeit, each team will be responsible to be at the correct field and the scheduled game time.

### **Section 7 - Scoring**

- A. One run shall be scored each time a runner legally touches all bases before the third out.
- B. In all classes batters hitting a home run or for base award need only touch first base. All other runners must advance one base.
- C. No run shall be scored if the third out of any inning is the result of:
  - 1. A batter-runner being called out prior to reaching first base or if any other runner is forced out due to the batter becoming a batter-runner.
  - 2. A runner being put out by a tag or live ball appeal prior to the runner touching home plate.
  - 3. A preceding runner is declared out on an appeal play.

Note: An appeal can be made after the third out in order to nullify a run.

### **Section 8 - Game Winner**

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

- A. The score of a called regulation game shall be the score at the end of the last completed inning, unless the team has scored an equal number or more than the first team at bat in the incomplete inning.
- B. The score of a regulation tie game shall be the tie score when the game was terminated.
- C. The score of a forfeited game shall be 7 to 0 in favor of the team not a fault.

### **Section 9 - Charged Conference**

- A. **Offensive Conference:** There shall be only one charged conference between manager and/or bench representative(s) with each player on the field in an inning.
- B. **Defensive Conference:** There shall be only two charged conference between the manager or other bench representative(s) with any defensive player in a game: Effect; All conferences with any defensive player beginning with the third conference, shall result in the removal of the pitcher from that position for the remainder of the game. The removed pitcher can play any other position.

### **Section 10 - Home Run Limits and Penalties**

A limit of over-the fence home runs will be used in the program on the following chart. All over-the-fence home runs hit in excess of the following limitations per game will be ruled on as shown on the chart. NOTE: for the purpose of this rule, a home run will be defined as an unaided ball over the fence in fair territory. All home runs will be considered a home run, even if there is an out recorded by appeal or by any reason. Any fair fly ball that is touched by a defensive player and goes over the fence in fair territory, will be declared a four base award and shall not be included in total over-the-fence home runs.

- A. Inning Ending Out: Per the chart when the offensive team has exceeded it's home run limit in the E or Novice division, the home run which put the team over the limit will end that half inning, no matter how many outs are left.
- B. Hitter hitting a Home Run , or four base award, must touch first base only, all other runners must advance one base. Base-runners not advancing one base must be appealed by the defensive team before the next pitch.
- C. The home run limits are designed to enable states to place the teams in the proper classification, and to increase participation with AFA keeping the player in mind.
- D. Any state that holds a tournament with home run limits other than what is listed in this rule book, that tournament will not be considered a qualifier. All State, National, and World Tournaments must be played in accordance with the home run chart listed in this book.

## **Rule 5 - Pitching Regulations**

### **Section 1 - Preliminaries**

- A. When starting the game and at each half inning or when one pitcher relieves another, no more that 3 warm up pitches may be delivered.
- B. No warm up pitches shall be allowed with excessive speed. EFFECT: The pitcher shall be warned. If act is repeated that pitcher will be removed from the pitcher position.

### **Section 2 - The Delivery**

A pitchers path from the front of pitching plate, 50 feet from home base, and extending 6 feet perpendicular to the pitchers plate toward second base shall be used. This path shall be outlined at the start of the game. One foot must be in line with the pitchers plate and within the pitching path when the pitch is

released, A step in any direction with the free foot, along with the pitch is permissible. The pitcher must be facing home plate when delivering the pitch. The catcher must remain within the lines of the catching box until the pitched ball is batted, touches the ground or home plate or reaches the catchers box. The pitching path allows the pitcher to pitch from 50ft to 56ft.

- A. The pitch starts when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the windup after making a required stop. Any type of wind up may be used but the ball must be delivered toward home plate below the hip, from the pitching hand at a moderate speed, which is entirely in the official's judgment. The official shall warn any pitcher that delivers a pitch with, in their judgment has excessive speed. Repeat offenders will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- B. The ball must be released within 5 seconds of the start of the wind-up or the official says "Play Ball". EFFECT: Section 2 (A-B): The ball is dead and a ball is awarded to the batter.
- C. The pitch must have a perceptible arc, having a minimum height of five (5) ft. and a maximum height of twelve (12) ft from the ground in the official's judgment.
- D. At no time during the game will the pitcher or any other player be allowed to use any foreign substances on the ball, pitching hand or fingers. Under the control of the official, powder resin may be used to dry hands. Wristbands, or batting gloves may not be worn on the pitching hand/wrist. A non distracting colored bandage may be worn on the pitching hand/wrist in the case of injury.

### **Section 3 - Illegal Delivery**

Any pitchers action that does not conform to the AFA pitching rules and regulations will be deemed illegal and a ball shall be awarded to the batter. If the batter swings at an illegal pitch, other than one that has hit the ground or home plate, the play shall stand on the results of the swing.

### **Section 4 - Quick Pitching**

The pitcher shall not pitch the ball before the batter has taken position or in an effort to catch the batter off balance as a result of the pitch. EFFECT: The ball is dead, a ball is awarded to the batter, and all runners must return to the base previously occupied before the pitch.

### **Section 5 - No Pitch**

No pitch shall be declared whenever any of the following occurs:

- A. The pitcher pitches during suspension of the play.
- B. A runner is called out for leaving a base before the pitched ball passes home plate or hits the ground or is batted.
- C. The pitcher pitches before a runner has retouched a base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball was dead.
- D. The ball slips from the pitchers hand during wind up or back swing.
- E. A member of the offensive team asks for time, or commits any act while the ball is in play, for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal act. NOTE: A warning shall be issued to the offending team. Any repeat act by any member of the team warned shall result in the offender being ejected from the game.

EFFECT: - Section 5 (A-E): The ball is dead and all subsequent action as result of the pitch is canceled.

### **Section 6 - Illegal Pitcher**

An illegal pitcher is a player legally in the game, but one who may not pitch as a result of being removed from the pitching position by the Official.

EFFECT: The illegal pitcher who returns to the pitching position and throws one pitch shall be ejected.

### **Section 7 - Questioning of Balls and Strikes**

No questioning of balls or strikes called by an Official will be tolerated. One warning will be given per team. On the second offense the offending player or member of the team will be ejected.

## **Rule 6 - Batting**

### **Section 1 - On Deck Batter**

- A. The on-deck batter is the offensive player whose name follows the name of the batter in the batting order.
- B. The on-deck batter may loosen up with no more than two official softball bats, an approved warm up bat or combination not to exceed two. Any detachable piece placed on the bat must be an approved device by the AFA National Office.
- C. The on-deck batter may not interfere with the defensive players opportunity to make a play:
  - 1. If it involves a runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference will be called out.
  - 2. If it is with the defensive fielder fielding a fly ball, the batter is out.

### **Section 2 - Batting Order**

- A. The batting order of each team showing the players first and last name and uniform number if used must be on the lineup card and delivered before the game by the manager or coach to the plate umpire. Include substitutes after the batting order. The plate official will submit it to the inspection of the manager or coach of the opposing team.
- B. The batting order delivered to the official must be followed throughout game, unless the player is replaced by a substitute. When this occurs, the substitute must take the place of the removed player in the batting order.
- C. The first batter in each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.
- D. Each player of the side at bat shall become the batter and step into the batters box in the order in which that batters name shows on the lineup card. This begins the batters turn at bat until the batter is put out or becomes a batter-runner.
- E. When a third out of an inning is made before the batter can complete a turn at bat, the same batter will be the first batter in the next inning, and all previous called balls and strikes will be canceled.

EFFECT: Section 2 A-E: Except for a wrong batter at bat, batting out of order

is an appeal play which may be made only by the defensive team. The defensive team forfeits its right to appeal batting out of order when one legal or illegal 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 on their way to the bench or dugout.

1. If an incorrect batter is discovered before the batter completes the turn at bat, the correct batter may take its proper place, assuming any accumulated balls and strikes.
2. If the mistake is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed the turn at bat, before a pitch has been made to a succeeding batter, the batter who should have batted is called out. All base runners, if they have advanced, must return to the base occupied at the time the incorrect batter batted. The next batter is the batter whose name follows that of the batter called out for failing to bat.
3. If the mistake is not discovered until a pitch is made to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is then legal. All bases advanced or runs scored are counted. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player that was scheduled to bat. No runner will be removed from the base that a runner is occupying, no one is called out for failure to bat, and players missing their turn at bat have lost that turn at bat until reached in the regular batter rotation.

### **Section 3 - Batting Position**

- A. The batter must have both feet completely within the lines of the batters box prior to the start of the pitch. The batter may touch the lines, but no part of a foot may be outside the lines prior to the pitch. In the absence of visible lines the official's decision will prevail.
- B. The batter must take a position in the batters box, within (5) five seconds after "Play Ball" has been declared by the official. EFFECT: The official will call a strike. No pitch has to be thrown and the ball remains dead.
- C. The batter shall not step directly in front of the catcher to the other batter box while the pitcher is in position to pitch. EFFECT: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and the runners may not advance.
- D. The batter must request time from the home plate official and be granted time before stepping out of the batter box. Granting time is at the discretion of the plate official and is not automatic.

### **Section 4 - Strike is Called by Official**

- A. For each legally pitched ball that enters the strike zone before touching the ground, not struck at by the batter. Note: The Official should not let the batters position, either in the front or rear of the batters box influence their calling strikes. Each pitch should be judged according to the height of any part of the ball as it is crossing only above or over any part of the home plate.
  1. The strike zone is only that part of the area over home plate that is lower than the top of the batters back shoulder and higher than the bottom of the front knee.
  2. The batter is allowed three strikes before being called out.
- B. For each pitch swung at and missed by the batter

- C. For each pitched ball swung at and missed which touches any part of the batter
- D. When any part of the batters person or clothing is hit with the batters own batted ball when the batter is in the batters box, and has fewer than two strikes
- E. When a delivered ball by the pitcher hits the batter while in the strike zone.
- F. If the batter does not take a position within the batters box within (5) five seconds after "Play Ball" has been declared
- G. For each foul ball not caught on the fly, with less than two strikes. EFFECT: Section 4 B-G: The ball is dead, and all runners must return to their base without liability to be put out
- H. When a pitched ball hits the umpire after being swung at. EFFECT: The ball is dead and a strike is called

**Section 5 - A Ball is Called by the Official**

- A. For each legally pitched ball which does not enter the strike zone, touches the ground before reaching home plate, or touches home plate, and the batter does not swing
- B. When a pitched ball hits the batter, or is touched by the batter outside the strike zone. EFFECT: The ball is dead
- C. When an illegal delivered pitch is made and not swung at
- D. When there is an illegal pitcher action
- E. When a pitched ball hits the official and not swung on EFFECT: The ball is dead and runners must return to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch.

**Section 6 - The Batter is Out**

- A. When the third strike is swung at and:
  - 1. Missed.
  - 2. Missed and the pitched ball touches any part of the batters person.
  - 3. Tipped and goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batters head, to the catchers hand(s) or glove and is legally caught by the catcher.
- B. When a batter enters the batters box with, or is discovered using an altered bat. The batter is also ejected from the game.
- C. When the batter enters the batters box with, or is discovered using an illegal bat, one which does not meet the requirements as set down by the AFA rules. An illegal bat shall be removed from the game, and any other player discovered using that bat will be ejected from the game.
- D. When the batter has illegally batted a ball either fair or foul:
  - 1. And the batters entire foot is completely outside the lines of the batters box and in contact with the ground at the time the ball is struck by the bat.
  - 2. And any part of the foot is touching home plate at the time the ball is struck by the bat.
- E. When the batter intentionally bunts the ball, either fair or foul, without swinging.
- F. NO intentional infield hits. EFFECT: ball is dead, batter is out.
- G. When the batter hits a fair ball with the bat a second time in fair territory.



EXCEPT: If the batter is standing in the batters box and contact is made while the bat is in the batters hand, a foul ball is ruled, even if the ball is hit a second time over fair territory. EFFECT: Section 6 A-G: The ball is dead and all runners must return to the base legally held at the time of the pitch. NOTE: If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory in the officials judgment there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball the batter is not declared out, and the ball is live.

- H. When the batter hits a fair fly ball, which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when there are runners at first and second or first, second and third bases with less than 2 outs. NOTE: Any defensive players who position themselves in the infield area at the start of the pitch, shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule. NOTE: The ball remains live at all times during the enforcement of the infield fly rule.
- I. When the batter hits a line drive caught and dropped intentionally by an infielder, with any of the bases occupied, before there are two outs. EFFECT: The ball is dead, all runners must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.
- J. When the batter hits a fly ball that is legally caught. Fly ball caught by the catcher must be above batters head. NOTE: a legally caught ball occurs when the fielder catches a batted, pitched or thrown ball with the hand or glove. In establishing a valid catch, the fielder must hold the ball long enough to prove they have complete control of it and/or that the release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. EFFECT: The ball is live and in play. EXCEPTIONS: The ball is dead if it is caught as the first foul ball after two strikes.
- K. If the catcher is attempting to make a play on a base runner attempting to steal, the batter shall not hinder the catcher from catching or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batters box, or intentionally hinder the catcher while standing within the batters box. The batter must make a legitimate attempt to get out of the way of a pitched ball. EFFECT: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and each runner must return to the last base that, in the judgment of the umpire, was last touched at the time of the interference.
- L. Any batter-runner who carries the bat, during a live ball, and legally reaches, touches or passes first base while still holding the bat will be declared out. Should it be the third out of the inning, no preceding runner shall score.
- M. When the batter hits a home run and that team has already hit their limit of home runs and cannot go one up at that time. EXCEPTION: In recreation or E divisions the out is an inning ending out.
- N. When the batter swings at a ball that has hit the ground or the plate. EFFECT: The ball is dead and all runners must return to the base they occupied before the pitch.
- O. When the batter hits a foul ball after (2) two strikes. EFFECT: The ball is dead, runners may not advance.
- P. The batter shall not wave the bat or make any motion with an obvious intention of interfering with the catcher receiving the pitch. After first warning to batter/team, a second offense by batter/team will result in batter being called out. The ball is dead and all base runners shall return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.
- Q. When the batter is hit by a fair batted ball while outside the batters box and advancing.

## **Rule 7 - Batter-Runner and Runner**

### **Section 1 - The Batter Becomes a Batter-Runner**

The batter becomes a batter-runner after finishing a turn at bat, but has not yet been put out or touched a base.

- A. As soon as the batter legally hits a fair ball
- B. When four balls have been called by the Official EFFECT: The ball is live and the batter-runner is awarded first base without liability to be put out.
- C. If the pitcher or catcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, they may do so by notifying the plate Official, who shall award the batter first base. EFFECT: The ball is dead.
- D. When the catcher obstructs, hinders or prevents the batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball EFFECT: The ball is dead and the batter-runner is awarded first base. All other runners move up one base, only if forced.
- E. When a fair batted ball strikes the person, attached equipment or clothing of an umpire.

EFFECT:

- 1. After touching a fielder (including the pitcher), the ball is in play.
  - 2. After passing a fielder other than the pitcher the ball is in play.
  - 3. Before passing a fielder without being touched the ball is dead.
- F. When a ball is caught with an illegal glove in any manner.
  - G. When an untouched batted ball strikes the person attached equipment or clothing of a runner while in fair territory and in contact with a base.

EFFECT: (F-G) The ball is dead and the batter-runner is awarded first base. All other runners move up one base, only if forced.

### **Section 2 - Batter - Runner is Out**

- A. When the batter-runner fails to advance to first base, and enters the team area after a batted fair ball or base on balls. EFFECT: The ball is dead and runner(s) must return to the last legally touched base.
- B. When the batter-runner runs outside of the three foot lane and, in the judgment of the official, interferes with the fielder taking the throw or making a play at first base. NOTE: The batter-runner may run outside of the three foot lane to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
- C. When the batter-runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, interferes with a fielder attempting to throw a ball, intentionally interferes with a thrown ball, makes contact with a fair batted ball before reaching first base. If this interference, in the official's judgment, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the runner closest to home plate will be called out. NOTE: A batter-runner being hit with a thrown ball does not necessarily constitute interference.
- D. When the batter-runner interferes with a play at home plate in an effort to prevent an obvious out at the plate.. NOTE: The runner is also out.
- E. When the batter-runner moves back toward home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder or flagrantly gives up the right to first base by entering dead ball territory.

EFFECT: Section 2 B-E: The ball is dead and runner(s) must return to the last legally touched base at the time of the interference.

- F. When the immediate preceding runner, who is not yet out, intentionally interferes, in the officials judgment, with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball, or throw a ball in an attempt to complete the play.
- G. When, after a fair ball, the batter-runner is touched with the ball by a fielder, while the batter-runner is off base.
- H. When, after a fair ball, a fielder hold the ball on first base before the batter-runner touches or passes that base.
- I. When the batter-runner impedes or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play.
- J. When using the double-base at first. The batter-runner steps entirely on the white portion of the double-base during the initial play being made at first base and is properly appealed by the defense prior to the runner returning to first base. NOTE: Exception: If the throw takes the defensive player into the running lane, the batter-runner may touch the white portion to avoid a collision.

### **Section 3 - Touching Bases in Legal Order**

- A. When a runner must return to a base while the ball is in play. The runner must touch the bases in reverse order.
- B. When a batter-runner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out, they are entitled to hold the base until they have legally touched the next base in order, or are forced to vacate it for a succeeding runner.
- C. When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither that runner, nor the succeeding runner(s) in the same series of play, are compelled to follow a base out of position.

EFFECT: Section 3 B-C: The ball is in play and runner may advance or return with liability to be put out.

- D. A runner shall not run the bases in reverse order either to confuse the fielders or to make a travesty of the game. EFFECT: The ball is dead, and the runner is out.
- E. Two 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.
- F. Failure of a preceding runner to touch a base, or to legally tag up on a caught fly ball and who is declared out, does not affect the status of a succeeding runner who touches bases in proper order. If the failure to touch a base in regular order, or to legally tag up on a caught fly ball is the third out of the inning, no succeeding runner may score.
- G. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one that the runner had left too soon after a following runner has scored, or once that runner leaves the field.
- H. Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be tagged prior to advancing to the next base.
- I. All awarded bases must be touched in order.

### **Section 4 - Runners are Entitled to Advance with Liability to be Put Out**

- A. On a thrown ball or a batted ball that is fair and not blocked.

- B. On a thrown ball that hits an official.
- C. When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
- D. If a fair ball strikes an official or runner after having passed an infielder other than the pitcher, and providing that no other infielder had a chance to make an out, or when a fair batted ball has been touched by an infielder including the pitcher. EFFECT: The ball remains live and in play.
- E. When a runner attempts to advance (STEAL) after a pitch to the batter in which the ball hits the ground, home plate, or passes home plate with no swing from the batter.
- F. When a live ball strikes a photographer, grounds keeper, policeman, etc. When they are assigned to the field as part of the game.

EFFECT: Section 4 A-F: The ball is in play

**Section 5 - Runners Forfeit their Exemption from Liability to be Put Out**

- A. 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.
- B. If, after over running first base, a runner attempts to continue to second base.
- C. If, after dislodging a base, a runner attempts to continue to the next base.

**Section 6 - Runners are Entitled to Advance Without Liability to be Put Out**

- A. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded an unintentional base on balls. All runners affected are entitled to one base and may advance farther at their own risk. NOTE: The ball is live.
- B. When a fielder, not in possession of the ball, not in the act of fielding a batted ball impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running the bases. NOTE: Obstructed runners are still required to touch all bases in proper order, or they could be called out on a proper appeal by the defensive team.
  1. If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base the runner would have reached had there not been an obstruction, a dead ball is called and the obstructed runner and any other runner affected by the obstruction will be awarded the base or bases they would have reached, in the officials judgment, had there not been an obstruction. An obstructed runner may never be called out between the two bases where the obstruction occurred. This runner would either be advanced or return to the last base touched. Should an act of interference occur following any obstruction, the enforcement of the interference penalty would have precedence.
  2. If the obstructed runner is put out after passing the base the runner would have reached had there not been an obstruction, the obstructed runner will be called out. The ball remains live.  
When a runner, while advancing or returning to a base, is obstructed by a fielder who neither has the ball, nor is attempting to field a batted ball, or a fielder who fakes a tag without the ball, the obstructed runner, and any other runner affected by the obstruction, will always be awarded the base or bases the runner would have reached in the officials judgment, had there been no obstruct-

- tion. NOTE: If the official feels there is justification, a defensive player making a fake tag could be ejected from the game.  
EFFECT: When an obstruction occurs (including rundown), it is a delayed dead ball. The ball will remain live.
4. If a defensive player is fielding a thrown ball and the flight carries or draws him into the path of the base runner, this would not constitute obstruction.
  5. If the ball, runner and defensive player all arrive at the same time and contact is made, the umpire should not make the collision rule (interference or obstruction). This is merely incidental contact.
- C. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded first base.
- D. When a fielder intentionally contacts or catches a fair batted or thrown ball with the fielders cap, mask, pocket, detached glove, or any part of their uniform which is detached from its proper place on their person. EFFECT: The runners would be entitled to three bases from the time of the pitch if a batted ball, or two bases from the time of the throw if a thrown ball, and in either case, they may advance farther at their own risk. If the illegal catch or touch is made on a fair batted ball, which in the judgment of the official, would have cleared the outfield fence in flight, the batter-runner shall be awarded a four base award.
- E. When the ball is in play and is overthrown (beyond the boundary lines) or is blocked. EFFECT: The ball is dead. All runners will be awarded two bases, and the award will be governed by the position of the runners when the ball left the fielders hand. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.

EXCEPTIONS:

1. When a fielder loses possession of the ball, such as on an attempted tag, and the ball enters the dead ball area or becomes blocked, each runner is awarded one base from the last touched base at the time the ball entered the dead ball area or became blocked.
  2. If the runner touches the next base and returns to the original base, the original base the runner left is considered the last base touched for the purpose of an overthrow award.
  3. If the ball becomes blocked due to offensive equipment, the ball is ruled dead, and the runners are returned to the last base 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.
- F. When a fair batted fly ball 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. It shall entitle the batter-runner to a home run, unless it passes out of the grounds at a distance less than the prescribed fence distance from home plate, in which case the batter-runner would be entitled to only two bases.
- G. When a fair batted ball deflects off a defensive player and goes out of play in foul territory, deflects off a runner or umpire after having passed an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and provided no other infielder had a chance to make an out. EFFECT: The ball is dead, and all runners are awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.

- H. When a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into dead ball territory. EFFECT: The ball is dead and each runner is awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the fielder entered dead ball territory. NOTE: A fielder carrying a live ball into the dugout or team area to tag a player is considered to have unintentionally carried it there.
- I. If, in the judgment of the official, a fielder intentionally carries, kicks, pushes or throws 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 touched at the time the fielder entered, or the ball was kicked, pushed or thrown into dead ball territory.

### **Section 7 - Runners Must Return to Their Base**

- A. When a batted ball is foul.
- B. When an illegally batted ball is declared by the umpire.
- C. When a batter, batter-runner or runner is called out for interference. Each other runner shall return to the last base which, in the officials judgment, was legally touched by the runner at the time of the interference.
- D. Runners must immediately return to their base, or continue to the next base, after each pitched ball is returned to the pitcher.
- E. Base runners will not be allowed to advance or steal when a pitched ball hits any part of the batters person other than the bat while the pitched ball is in the air, or hits the ground and bounces into the batters person before being touched by the catcher. EFFECT: The ball is dead.
- F. When a pitched ball is touched by an umpire or accidentally lodges on the umpires person. EFFECT: The ball is dead.

### **Section 8 - The Runner is Out**

- A. When running to any base in regular or reverse order and the runner runs out of the base path to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand(s) of the fielder.
- B. When the ball is in play and the runner is not in contact with a base, and is legally touched with the ball in the hand(s) of a fielder.
- C. When, on a force play, a fielder contacts the base while holding the ball, touches the ball to the base, or tags the runner before the runner reaches the base.
- D. When the runner fails to return to touch the base previously occupied or missed and is properly appealed.
- E. When the runner physically passes the lead runner before that runner has been put out.

EFFECT: Section 8 A-E: The ball is in play and the runner is out.

- F. When the runner leaves the base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has touched a fielder, provided the ball is returned to that base and is properly appealed.
- G. When the runner fails to touch the intervening base or bases in regular or reverse order and the ball is returned to that base and is properly appealed.
- H. When the batter-runner legally overruns first base, attempts to run to second and is legally touched while off the base.
- I. When running or sliding for home plate, and the runner fails to touch it

makes no attempt to return to it and a fielder while touching the plate, properly appeals to the official for a decision.

- J. When the runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, interferes with a fielder attempting to throw a ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the judgment of the official, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play and occurs before the runner is put out, the immediate succeeding runner will also be called out. NOTE: If a ball ricochets off one defensive player and another player has the opportunity to make an out, the runner will be called out if the runner interferes with the second fielder.
- K. When the runner is struck with a fair untouched batted ball while not in contact with the base. EFFECT: The ball is dead.
- L. When a base runner leaves the base to advance to the next base before a fly ball has been touched or touches some object, provided that if the ball is caught and legally held on the base left, or a fielder touched the runner with the ball before the runner returns to touch the original base.
- M. When a batter-runner fails to touch an intervening base or bases in regular or reverse order while the ball is in play, and the ball is legally held on the missed base, or the runner is touched with the ball while off the base.
- N. When the base runner jumps over a defensive player waiting to tag the runner out. NOTE: If the feet go over waist high, or if the defensive player is kneeling, and the base runners feet go above the head. EFFECT: The base runner is out, and may be ejected from the game.

EFFECT: Section 8 K-N: When runners are called out for interference, the batter-runner is awarded first base and is credited with a base hit.

- O. When the runner intentionally kicks a ball which an infielder has missed.
- P. When anyone, other than another runner, physically assists the runner while the ball is in play. If the assistance occurs prior to a caught, batted fly ball, regardless of whether the ball is fair or foul, a delayed dead ball call will be made, after which the runner will be declared out. EFFECT: The ball is dead if not caught. If a fair ball, award the batter-runner one base, and if a foul ball the batter will bat again. This includes a home run.
- Q. When the coach near third base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the third base line while a fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball, and thereby draws a throw to home plate. The runner closest to home will be declared out.
- R. When one or more members of the offensive team stand or collect around a base to which a runner is advancing thereby confusing the fielder and adding to the difficulty of making the play. NOTE: Members of the team include a bat boy or any other person authorized to sit on the team's bench.
- S. When a coach intentionally interferes with the defensive teams opportunity to make a play on a runner. The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out.

EFFECT: Section 8 O-S: The ball is dead and the runner is out. Each other runner must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference.

- T. When, after being declared out or after scoring, a runner interferes with a defensive players opportunity to make a play on another runner.

EFFECT: The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out.

- U. When a defensive player has the ball, and the runner remains on their feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player. EFFECT: The runner is out and ejected from the game. The ball is dead and each runner must return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.
- V. When the runner fails to keep contact with the base to which the runner is entitled until a pitched ball touches the ground, passes home plate or is batted. EFFECT: The ball is dead.
- W. When the runner abandons a base and enters the teams area or leaves the field of play.
- X. If a base runner does not return to the base and be in contact with the base at the time the pitcher releases a legally pitched ball to the batter. NOTE: Each team shall receive one warning per game for this infraction, before the runner is called out.

### **Section 9 - Verbal Interference**

Any distraction vocal or otherwise that would hinder or impede a fielder attempting to complete a play. EFFECT: The ball is dead. Runners must return to the last base occupied. Offending player or runner closest to home is out. Offending player may be ejected in the event of an injury.

### **Rule 8 - AFA Women's Program**

AFA Basic Rules will govern women's play with the following exceptions:

- A. The official approved softball for AFA women's play shall be an 11" ball with a maximum compression of 300 with a msp-core of .52. The ball does not require an AFA stamp.
- B. The women's program will feature three divisions: C, D and E.

NOTE: The AFA Representatives, Tournament Directors, and Area Directors reserve the right to equalize by run spot any Women's tournament as deemed appropriate. The equalization standard for such tournaments will be set by each respective Area Director with the authority over the Women's Program. See Home Run and Classification Chart for further information.

### **Rule 9 - Men's Master Program**

AFA Basic Rules will govern play with the following exceptions:

- A. Age qualifications - December 31 is the official cut off date. Any player whose birthday (35, 40) is on or before December 31 of that current year is eligible.
- B. Player Identification - A player must provide proof of identity when requested by an AFA tournament director. If any player cannot do this, they will be declared ineligible until proper proof of identity can be furnished.
- C. The Men's Master Program will feature 2 Divisions: Upper and Lower.
- D. Any Men's Master team that has players on it's roster who played during the current season on a Super team in any association will be required to



play in an upper division.

Courtesy Runners - Will be allowed in all Masters Programs. Only one courtesy runner per team per inning may be used. The courtesy runner may be anyone on the roster and must have crossed home plate before their turn at bat.

## **Rule 10 - Co-Ed Program**

AFA basic rules will govern play with the following exceptions:

- A. 5 males and 5 female players will be considered a legal team or 6 males and 6 female players whenever (AP) is used.
- B. It will be permissible to have more females than males in the lineup, but never more males than females. EXCEPTION: If a female player(s) gets injured, ejected or unexpectedly leaves the game, the team may continue to play as long as (4) female players remain in the lineup. At no time will (6) six males be permitted to play defense at the same time.
- C. Batting order for Co-Ed teams will alternate between males and females. You may bat two females back to back, but never two males.
- D. A team may end the game with only 9 players, if injury occurs. An out is called if there is no substitute for the injured player.
- E. Male batters will hit the approved 12" softball normally used in Men's play. Female batters will hit the 11" approved ball used in women's play.
- F. Field dimensions for Co-Ed play will be the same as with all other AFA play except:
  - 1. In AFA E-division only, Co-Ed State, National or World Tournaments there shall be a line drawn from foul line to foul line. This line being a constant 200 ft. from home plate.
    - a. Any defensive player considered as an outfielder by the umpire will not be allowed to step forward of this line when a female is batting until the female batter has actually hit the pitched ball.
    - b. Any defensive considered to be an infielder by the official shall remain in their normal defensive position until the female batter has hit.

EFFECT: G-1 A-B: The penalty for violating this rule by a defensive player shall result in the female batter being awarded first base, and all other runners remaining on the base where they were at the time the ball was pitched unless forced to the next base by the batter being awarded first base. This call may be made by any field umpire and shall be a judgment call. No appeals or protests will be allowed pertaining to this call. The umpire making the call shall immediately yell "Time Out" or "Dead Ball" or both, at the time the defensive player commits the violation and awarded the female batter in question, first base.

- 2. Defensive players must stay in their defensive positions that are established after the first pitch of the inning unless injured or replaced by a substitute from the bench. (Pitchers may be changed one time per inning. The defense may change positions.)
- H. Base on Balls - Any male batter who receives a base on balls whether intentional or not will be awarded second base (all other runners will

advance only if forced by this walk.) and the female batter following him will have the option of taking a free base on balls or her time at bat. If she elects to take the free base on balls, she must do so before the first legally pitched ball is thrown to her. No pitch may be made until the next female batter confirms to the umpire her choice of taking the free base on balls or a time at bat.

- I. Courtesy Runners: Two courtesy runners may be used per half inning. One male and one female. A female can run for any player once per half inning, but a male may only run for a male. The courtesy runner may be anyone on the team roster but must finish their run before their turn at bat.
- J. The Co-Ed Program will include three divisions. These classes will be C, D and E. Men/Women who play on Men's/Women's class C and above shall be required to play in the Co-Ed C Division. Men/Women who play in Men's/Women's class D shall be required to play in the Co-Ed C or D Division. Men/Women who play in Men's/Women class E may play in any of the Co-Ed Divisions.

NOTICE: The AFA reserves the right to move Co-Ed teams to a different class at any time it feels a team is not playing in the right class. The AFA reserves the right to make any tournament an equalizer if needed.

### Home Run Chart

Home Run: any unaided hit ball over the fence in fair territory. All home runs will be considered a home run no matter if any out is recorded by an appeal or by any other reason. If the ball is touched going over the fence, it will be considered a four base error and will not count against home run limit for balls hit over the fence.

<b>Class of Play</b>	<b>Division</b>	<b>Home Run limit</b>	<b>Penalty over limit</b>
<b>Men's</b>	B	8 then 1 up	Out
<b>Men's</b>	C	5 then 1 up	Out
<b>Men's</b>	D	3 home runs	Out
<b>Men's</b>	E	1 home run	Inning ending out
<b>Women's</b>	C	5 then 1 up	Out
<b>Women's</b>	D	3 home runs	Out
<b>Women's</b>	E	1 home run	Inning ending out
<b>Co-Ed</b>	C	5 then 1 up	Out
<b>Co-Ed</b>	D	3 home runs	Out
<b>Co-Ed</b>	E	1 home run	Inning ending out
<b>Masters</b>	Upper	4 then 1 up	Out
<b>Masters</b>	Lower	1 up	Out



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