

# NCCSFL SOFTBALL RULE BOOK

Adopted 2004 in formerly GACCSFL; Based on ASA Rules. Revised v6.1 (4/11/2024)

## **RULE 1 – DEFINITIONS**

**Sec. 1 ALTERED BAT:** When the physical structure of a legal bat has been changed.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, the batter is out and base runners may not advance. The batter is ejected for using an altered bat.

**Sec. 2 APPEAL PLAY:** A play in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a manager, coach or player. The appeal must be made before the next pitch, or before all infielders have left the field (crossed the foul lines).

**Sec. 3 BALL:** When the ball is pitched and:

- a. Any part of the ball does not cross any part of the plate while in the strike zone,
- b. The ball makes contact with the plate.

**Sec. 4 BASE PATH:** The area, 3 feet on either side of a direct line between the bases.

**Sec. 5 BASE RUNNER:** An offensive player who has reached first base and has not yet been put out.

**Sec. 6 BATTER'S BOX:** The area in which the batter is restricted to, while in position to bat. The batter must have both feet entirely within the lines of the box prior to the pitch (the lines are considered to be within the box).

- a. **EXCEPTION:** *If there is not a lined batter's box, the batter must set up to hit close enough to touch the plate with the bat in their hands. The batter is not allowed to take a "walking swing," and must have at least one foot constantly contacting the ground when the ball is released from the pitcher's hand.*

**RULING:** The ball is dead, the batter is out, base runners may not advance.

**Sec. 7 BATTER-BASE RUNNER:** An offensive player who has finished his turn at bat, but has not yet been put out, or touched first base.

**Sec. 8 BATTING ORDER:** The listed sequence that offensive players must come to bat.

**Sec. 9 BLOCKED BALL:** A live ball that comes in contact with a person or a piece of equipment that is not an eligible part of the official play or playing area.

**NOTE:** *A blocked ball is not called when a live ball strikes a base coach unintentionally.*

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

**Sec. 10 BUNT:** A fair ball in which the batter does not take a full swing at the ball, but holds the bat in such a manner in the path of the ball, to tap the ball slowly to the infield.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, the batter is out and base runners may not advance.

**Sec. 11 CATCH:** A legally caught ball that occurs when a fielder secures a batted or thrown ball with his/her hand or glove. If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arms or prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body or clothing, the catch is not complete until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hand or glove. It is not a catch if a fielder collides with a person or object immediately after he/she contacts the ball, resulting in the ball falling to the ground. In establishing a valid catch, the fielder shall have complete control of the ball, and his/her release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If a player drops the ball while in the act of throwing, it is a valid catch.

**NOTE:** *An intentional dropped ball is a ball that has first been caught, by the definition of a catch, and is then intentionally dropped in an attempt to confuse or obtain additional outs.*

**RULING:** The ball is dead, the batter-base runner is called out, and all other runners are protected under the obstruction rule.

**EXAMPLE:** *A batted fly ball, before touching the ground, strikes F5 on the head, and while still in the air, is caught by F6.*

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

**EXAMPLE:** *The batter hits a sharp line drive, which after passing F4 strikes the umpire over fair*

*territory. The ball ricocheted and is caught by F4 while still in flight*

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

**Sec. 12 CHARGED CONFERENCE:** A charged conference takes place when:

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

**Sec. 13 CHOPPED BALL:** When the batter strikes a pitched ball downward with a chopping motion.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, the batter is out and base runners may not advance.

**Sec. 14 COACH:** A member of the team at bat who takes his place in the coach's box to direct his/her player's in running, the bases. Two coaches are allowed, one positioned in foul territory at first base and one positioned in foul territory at third base. The defensive coaches/manager must remain in the dugout, as their normal position, when their team is playing defense.

**Sec. 15 DEAD BALL:** The ball is not in play and not considered in play again, until the pitcher has the ball in his possession and the umpire has called or signaled, "Play ball".

**Sec. 16 FAIR BALL:** A fair ball is a batted ball that:

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

**NOTE:** *A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and foul line and not as to the position of the fielder at the time he/she touches the ball. Home plate is in fair territory.*

**EXAMPLE:** *Batted ball first hits fair territory, and before being touched, rolls into fair territory between home and 1st where it settles.*

**RULING:** Fair ball

**Sec. 17 FLAGRANT PLAYER OBSTRUCTION:** A defensive fielder shall not at any time flagrantly impede the batter/runner or runner.

**EXAMPLE:** *First base player puts foot across entire bag while waiting for thrown ball, creating a trip hazard.*

**RULING:** All base runners advance one base. If the obstruction is committed with excessive force, then the defensive player will be ejected.

**Sec. 18 FORCE OUT:** A force out is an out which can be made only when a base runner loses the right to the base he is occupying because the batter becomes a batter-base runner, and before the batter-runner or a succeeding base runner has been put out.

**Sec. 19 FOUL BALL:** A foul ball is a batted ball that:

- a. Settles on foul territory between home and 1st base or home and 3rd base.
- b. Bounds past 1st and 3rd base over foul territory.
- c. Falls first on foul territory beyond 1st or 3rd base.
- d. While on or over fair territory, touches an umpire, player or foreign object to the natural ground.

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

**Sec. 20 FOUL TIP:** A foul tip is a batted ball, which goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head, to the catcher's hands or glove/mitt, and is legally caught by the catcher. A foul tip is a strike. The batter is out if it is the third strike. A foul tip is a dead ball.

**Sec. 21 GROUND RULE DOUBLE:** A play when a batted ball makes contact with the playing field, does not make contact with any fielders, travels beyond the designated home run line (in fair territory) and is blocked from the closest umpire's view.

**RULING:** All base runners are automatically awarded two bases from the occupied base when the ball was hit.

**NOTE:** Only the umpire(s) can determine this call. Continue play until signaled by the umpire(s).

**Sec. 22 HOME PLATE:** Home plate is defined as the white portion of the plate. The black, rubber edging will not be considered part of the plate.

**Sec. 23 ILLEGAL BAT:** An illegal bat is one that does not meet the designated requirements.

**Sec. 24 ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL:** An illegally batted ball occurs when:

- a. A batter's entire foot is completely out of the batter's box/area, on the ground, when he/she hits the ball, fair or foul.
- b. Any part of the batter's foot is directly in front of, touching or behind home plate (strike mat) when he/she hits the ball.
- c. The batter hits the ball with an illegal, altered or non-approved bat.

**Sec. 25 ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL:** Occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with his cap, illegal glove or any part of his/her uniform detached from its proper place.

**Sec. 26 ILLEGAL PLAYER:** A player who enters the line-up without the right to the offensive or defensive position.

**Sec. 27 INELIGIBLE PLAYER:** A player who is unregistered or who does not meet requirements to register.

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

**Sec. 28 INFIELD FLY:** An infield fly is a pop-up hit in the infield, and there are less than 2 outs, and runners are on first and second base, or the bases are loaded.

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

**Sec. 29 INNING:** An inning is that portion of a game within which the teams alternate between offense/defense and there are 3 outs for each team. A new inning begins when the third out of the bottom of an inning is recorded.

**Sec. 30 INTERFERENCE:** Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member, which impedes or confuses a defensive player while attempting to execute a play. If judged so by the umpire, vocal interference may be called.

**Sec. 31 LEGAL TOUCH:** A legal touch occurs when a runner or batter-runner, who is not touching a base, is touched by the ball while the ball is held securely in a fielder's hand. The ball is not considered as being securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after having touched the runner, unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand of the fielder. It is sufficient for the fielder to touch the runner with the glove, which holds the ball.

**Sec. 32 LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL:** A legally caught ball occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball, provided the ball is not caught in the fielder's cap, hat, pocket, protector or any other part of his/her uniform. It must be caught and firmly held with the hand or hands.

**Sec. 33 OBSTRUCTION:** Obstruction is the act of:

- a. A defensive player or team member, which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.  
Note: Catcher obstruction is called when the catcher obstructs the batter in any way, who is attempting to hit or swing at a pitch. Prior to the pitch, catcher obstruction does not apply, a dead ball shall be called and allow the batter to reset themselves.
- b. A fielder, while not in possession or immediate process of receiving the ball, impedes the progress of a base runner who is legally running the bases.

**Sec. 34 OVERSLIDE:** An over slide is the act of the offensive player sliding over and beyond a base he is attempting to reach. This is usually caused when his/her momentum causes him/her to lose contact with the base, which then causes him/her to be in jeopardy. The batter-runner may over slide 1st base, without being in

jeopardy of being put out, if he/she immediately returns to that base.

**Sec. 35 OVERTHROW:** An overthrow is a play in which a ball is thrown to retire a runner who has not yet reached, or is off base, and goes into foul territory, beyond the boundary lines of the playing field.

**Sec. 36 PINCH RUNNER:** A designated, substitute base runner for any injured batter who safely reaches first base that may be used to avoid further injury as a base runner.

- a. The umpire must be informed and announce all pinch runners prior to the at bat when applicable.
- b. The batter must safely reach first base at which time he/she will be considered a base runner.
- c. Once the play is finished, the pinch runner will take over base running duties of the batter-base runner.
- d. The pinch runner must be the last person of the same sex determined "out" on the scorebook. If there have not been any designated outs, the pinch runner must be the last person listed on the roster of the same sex. If no runner of the same sex is available, then a runner of the opposite sex may be used following the last out rule.
- e. Once the pinch-runner designation is utilized in a game, for a specific batter, the batter must continue using a pinch-runner through the entire game.
- f. In the event of an overthrow in a pinch runner situation, any awarded bases will be awarded to the pinch runner at the conclusion of the play following the guidelines of the overthrow rule.

**EXCEPTION:** If a batter is injured while attempting to reach first base and utilizes a pinch runner he/she may continue to run the bases without the pinch runner at the next and all succeeding at bats. He/she may utilize the pinch runner anytime thereafter and shall adhere to the standard pinch runner regulations.

**Sec. 37 QUICK PITCH:** A quick pitch is made by the pitcher, with the attempt to catch the batter off balance. This would be before the batter takes his/her position in the batter's box, or while he/she is still off balance as a result of the previous pitch.

**RULING:** "Illegal Pitch" would be called and play would continue. Ball would be called, unless batter swung at pitch.

**Sec. 38 STEALING:** Not allowed.

**Sec. 39 STRIKE:** When the pitched ball crosses any portion of the of the plate while in the strike zone without contacting the plate.

**Sec. 40 STRIKE MAT:** Defined as a rubber mat placed right behind the black rubber corner of home plate and extends 3 feet with a square end used to define strikes during a stand-in umpire. If a legal pitched ball strikes any part of the mat on the first touch of the ground, it is defined as a "strike".

**Sec. 41 STRIKE ZONE:**

- a. The strike zone is that space over any part of the plate, between the batter's highest shoulder and his/her front knee, when the batter assumes a natural batting stance. Where the ball contacts the ground or glove has no bearing on the actual strike zone.

**EXCEPTION:** If a stand-in umpire is used, a strike mat is required behind home plate. When the pitched ball hits any part of the strike mat in addition to a legal pitch, the pitch shall be called a "strike".

**Sec. 42 TIME:** The term used by the umpire to order suspension of play.

**Sec. 43 TURN AT BAT:** It begins when he/she enters the batter's box/area and continues until he/she is put out or becomes a base runner.

**Sec. 44 WALKING A MALE BATTER IN FRONT OF A FEMALE BATTER:**

**RULING:** If a male batter is walked with 4 straight balls without a strike with a female batting behind him, the male batter will be sent to 2nd base no matter what.

**EXCEPTION:** If at least one strike is thrown during the course of the at-bat, this rule does not apply.

## **RULE 2 – THE PLAYING FIELD**

**Sec. 1 THE PLAYING FIELD:** The field is the area within which the ball may be legally played and fielded. The NCCSFL will determine the eligible playing fields for each game during the season.

**Sec. 2 GROUND RULES AND SPECIAL RULES:** Establishing the limits of the playing field may be agreed upon by opposing teams whenever backstops, fences, stands, vehicles, spectators or other obstructions are

within the prescribed area.

**Sec. 3 PLAYING FIELD MARKINGS:** should include the minimum for foul lines. Out-of-play and homerun designations must be agreed upon and expressed by the umpire(s), before every game.

**Sec. 4 THE DIAMOND:** The official diamond shall have a pitching distance of 50 feet and a base distance of 65 feet.

**Sec. 5 DISCREPANCIES:** If any markings or distances are found to be in error, the error should be corrected immediately, and the game should be continued.

## **RULE 3 – EQUIPMENT**

**Sec. 1 SAFETY AND FAIRNESS:** The NCCSFL reserves the right to approve or reject any softball related equipment for its intended use in the NCCSFL Program. If the NCCSFL believe in any way shape or form that a particular piece of equipment is dangerous or not acceptable for fair play, the NCCSFL reserves the right to immediately ban such equipment.

**Sec. 2 THE OFFICIAL BAT:** Must have either the approved **ASA 2000 certification mark**, the **ASA 2004 certification mark**, the **ASA 2013 certification mark**, or the **USA Softball certified mark** as shown below, and be included on the list of approved bat models published by [USA Softball \(formerly ASA\)](#), and not be listed on the non-approved list. Make, model number, and ASA/USA Softball stamp on bat must be legible. Bat must also meet all other requirements of this section.



- a. The official non-altered bat, made up of the knob, handle, grip, taper, barrel and end cap shall be free of burs, dents cracks, sharp edges, rattles and show no signs of excessive wear, DEEP DENTS OR DANGEROUS DENTS, fractures of any type or any type of exterior fastener that would present a safety hazard.

**EXCEPTION:** *At the umpire's or commissioner's discretion slightly dented bats may be considered legal.*

- b. It is each coach's responsibility to have a ASA/USA Softball approved bat list in possession during any game, with his/her players bats identified on the list by make and model number, failure to provide evidence that bat meets above legal standards, if noticed during game play, will result in: bat and batter being immediately removed from the game and team charged an out, If noticed after ball has been hit into play all base runners must return to original base.

**NOTE:** *Game play is any time after a batter takes the first pitch.*

### **Sec. 3 THE OFFICIAL SOFTBALLS:**

- a. **MEN'S BALL** - The ball shall be a 12" diameter, smooth seamed, concealed stitched or flat surfaced ball provided by the NCCSFL. Maximum C.O.R. will be no greater than .52 and the compression must be a maximum of 300 pounds.
- b. **WOMEN'S BALL** - The ball shall be a 11" diameter, smooth seamed, concealed stitched or flat surfaced ball provided by the NCCSFL. Maximum C.O.R. will be no greater than .52 and the compression must be a maximum of 300 pounds.
- c. During the course of a game, if the provided ball becomes lost or damaged, the team causing the damage or loss is required to provide a NCCSFL approved ball. The ball can be from a previous competition, but must meet the minimum standards. Each coach and the home plate umpire must approve the replacement ball.

**Sec. 4 GLOVES/MITTS:** All fielders must wear Softball gloves or mitts. The catcher's glove/mitt may be any size. The gloves worn by all fielders with the exception of the catcher shall be governed by the following specifications:

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

**Sec. 5 SHOES:** All players, Coaches and participants must wear shoes. A shoe shall be made with either canvas or leather uppers or similar materials. The sole may be either smooth or have soft or hard rubber or polyurethane cleats. Metal cleats or any type of shoe that has exposed metal on the sole, other than a rivet, may not be worn. Shoes that have steel or any type of metal tips on the cleats such as (but not limited to) soccer shoes, golf shoes, football and track shoes are illegal.

**RULING:** No player will be allowed to compete in NCCSFL play that is not wearing proper shoes. If it is discovered during the game that a player is wearing improper shoes, or no shoes, the team must use a substitute until such time as the player puts on proper shoes.

**Sec. 5 STRAY EQUIPMENT:** No Equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in foul or fair territory. Each team is responsible for their equipment.

**Sec. 6 UNIFORM/APPAREL:** Uniforms are not required. Appropriate sporting apparel is required.

- a. A pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thigh, which may be distracting to the batter.
- b. Most jewelry is allowed, but not recommended (highly). “Dangling” and “Looping” jewelry is not allowed, if judged by the umpire to present a danger to ANY participant.
- c. Casts, (plaster, metal or other hard substances) or other items judged dangerous by the umpire may not be worn during the game. Any exposed metal may be considered legal, if covered by soft material and taped.

**NOTE:** *Un-exposed jewelry is legal as long as it remains un-exposed. If any illegal type jewelry continues to become exposed the umpire can ask the player to remove it.*

**RULING:** If the umpire determines a piece of jewelry to present a danger to ANY participant, the player must be substituted until the jewelry is removed.

- d. All clothing must be worn in modesty. Shirts must be long enough to cover the “beltline”. No undergarments shall be showing during game play.

**RULING:** If the umpire or commissioner determines that a piece of clothing is inappropriate or revealing, he/she will communicate the issue to the coach of the offending team. The player will not be allowed to play until appropriate clothing is worn or clothing is worn in an appropriate manner.

**Sec. 7 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:** The NCCSFL **HIGHLY RECOMMENDS** protective equipment. All players are permitted to wear any approved protective equipment including catcher’s equipment, batter’s helmet, and soccer style shin guards. If used, the equipment must not be detached during play.

**Sec. 8 OFFICIAL SCOREBOOK:** NCCSFL will provide official scorebooks every season, the number player batting line-up positions will be limited to space provided in the scorebook provided by NCCSFL for the current season.

## **RULE 4 – PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS**

**Sec. 1 DIVISION OF PLAY:** The NCCSFL has only one adult-coed division. Players must have reached the age of 16 by the time regular season play begins.

**EXCEPTION:** *An individual may qualify if he/she has reached the age of 15 by the time the regular season begins and his/her parent/guardian is present at the field during the duration of play.*

**Sec. 2 THE TEAM:** Each team must have the required number of players to start or continue a game.

Requirements are:

- a. A team must have a minimum of eight (8) players. A team may not play more than ten (10) defensive players at any time.
- b. A team shall have a maximum of one eligible player per space allowed on the NCCSFL sanctioned

scorebook (usually between 15 and 18 players).

- c. If there are eight defensive players, one must be female. If there are nine defensive players, two must be female. If there are ten defensive players, three must be female. One female must play in an outfield/rover position and one must play in an infield position not including the catcher. If there is only one female, she must play in an outfield/rover or infield position not including the catcher.
- d. The batting order must be constructed in such a way that at least one female must bat in each of the following sections of the batting order, 1-3, 4-7, 8-10 (*if 10 players on line-up*), 11-13 (*if 13 players on line-up*), 14-16 (*if 16 players on line-up*), if not enough female batters are present, the appropriate female batting position must be left vacant and charged as a dead-ball out. If official scorebook allows space, batters 17 and 18 may be either male or female. Line-Up is never to exceed more than 3 consecutive male batters, not to include going from bottom to top of line-up rotation, which should never exceed more than 4 consecutive male batters.

***SIMPLE BREAK DOWN:***

Less than 10 players on line-up require minimum of 2 female batters.

10 players on line-up require minimum of 3 female batters.

13 players on line-up require minimum of 4 female batters.

16 players on line-up require minimum of 5 female batters.

***NOTE:*** *If not enough females are present to fill additional line-up positions, a team may elect to bat additional male batters and take a charged dead-ball out at the line-up position the female batter(s) should have occupied.*

- e. When a team is left with a vacant spot in the lineup, and has two outs in the inning, the opposing team may not intentionally or unintentionally walk the previous batter, in order to get to the “automatic out” created by the vacant spot in the batting order. If the batter is walked, the vacant spot in the batting order is skipped, the “automatic out” is waived, and the next batter is the player whose name follows the vacant spot in the batting order.

***NOTE:*** *If the batter has 2 strikes in the count, this rule shall not apply.*

- f. A new player may be added to the end of the batting order, up to the first pitch of the fourth inning, players arriving after this time will be only allowed to play on a same sex substitution basis, following the guidelines set for substitute players. (One active player per space allowed on the NCCSFL sanctioned scorebook, usually between 15 and 18 players).

***NOTE:*** *If a team has a vacant spot, due to player shortage or injury and is being charged an out for the vacant spot, if a legal substitute arrives or is present, he/she may be inserted into the vacant spot immediately, regardless of inning.*

**Sec. 3 THE PLAYERS:** A player shall be officially in the game when his/her name has been entered on the official score sheet, or has been announced. The following regulations govern the substitution of players:

- a. The coach or team representative shall notify the plate umpire and other team at the time a substitute enters the game. Failure to notify the umpire and other team of a substitution would create an illegal substitution.

***RULING:*** Immediate ejection from the game whenever the infraction is discovered.

***NOTE:*** *Re-entry is considered a substitution and if an illegal entry occurs, the penalty is the immediate ejection of the illegal player.*

- b. Substitute players will be considered in the game as follows:

(1) If a batter, when he/she takes his/her place in the batter’s box.

(2) If a fielder, when he/she takes the place of the fielder he/she is substituting.

(3) If a runner, when he/she replaces the player on the base he/she is holding.

(4) If a pitcher, when he/she takes his/her place on the pitcher’s plate.

**In 1-4 above, in each case a pitch has to be thrown or a play has to have been made.**

- c. Any of the starting players may be completely withdrawn from the game and re-entered once, provided that the players occupy the original position in the batting order whenever in the game.

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

- d. Violation of the re-entry rule results in the use of an illegal player.

***RULING:*** The immediate ejection of the ineligible player when the violation is brought to the attention of the umpire by the offended team. If first corrected by the offending team, without notice, there is no penalty.

- e. Each pitcher (starter or substitute) must pitch until the first batter facing him/her has completed his/her turn at bat, the side has been retired or he/she has been ejected from the game. A pitcher removed from the game, by rule or ejection, is not subject to this rule 5 (c). Any other player may be removed from the game at any time.
- f. A player substituted for in the game shall not participate in the game, except as a coach.

**NOTE:** *Any player participating in any NCCSFL Sanctioned Event must be physically able to participate. By physically able, the player must be able to walk on and off the field and play the game as intended. This is intended to keep injured people from further injury.*

**Sec. 4 ILLEGAL PLAYER:** The use of an illegal player is handled as an appeal to the umpire and/or. A Player will not violate the illegal player provision until he/she enters the game and one (1) pitch is thrown. Any action before one pitch is thrown is correctable. An illegal player violation results in the immediate ejection of the illegal player. In addition, the following penalties will apply:

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

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

**EXAMPLE:** *Smith enters the game in the 4th inning and was not reported. In the 6th inning the opposing team reports this to the umpire.*

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

**EXAMPLE:** *Smith enters the game in the 4th inning, and was not reported. Smith legally reaches 1st base and before the next pitch, is reported to the Home Plate Umpire.*

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

## **Sec. 5 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY AND ROSTERS**

- a. The NCCSFL's Official Roster Signing Date will be the date in which the player can complete 50% of the season games, before Tournament play.
- b. All Tournament-eligible players must have played a minimum of 40% of the regular-season/tournament-play games. The Commissioning Council must approve any potential exceptions, including players playing for another team, before Tournament play begins. **All exceptions are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.**
- c. It is highly recommended that every player participate in a minimum of two (2) church services per month.

## **Sec. 6 PICK-UP PLAYERS**

- a. Pick-up players (players not normally on that team) can only be used to supplement the number of players to field a team of 10 with a minimum of 3 girls. If, at the start of the game, there are enough players to meet the total of 10 players with 3 girls minimum required, no pick-up players will be permitted to play. If pick-up players are needed for a team to avoid forfeiting a game, the pick-up player will bat in the last available gender spot in the batting order according to the league batting lineup requirements. Any pick-up player, regular sub or regular player is required to sign the NCCSFL Liability waiver prior to playing. During a tournament, a pick-up player may only play on a team if they have played during the regular season. (See Rule 4, Sec. 5, Subsec. b).

## **RULE 5 – THE GAME**

**Sec. 1 SCORING:** The home team will be the official score and it is the obligation of the visiting team to verify the score at the end of each half inning.

**Sec. 2 NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:** None will be allowed on the premises during any NCCSFL event.

**Sec. 3 NO TOBACCO/VAPE PRODUCTS:** None will be allowed on the premises during any NCCSFL event.

Umpires may charge teams with an out if a player refuses to follow rule after having been given a warning.

**Sec. 4 HOME TEAM DESIGNATION:** Determined by the team schedule. During tournament play, the team that wins the “coin toss” will be able to designate the “Home Team.”

**Sec. 5 GROUND FITNESS:** Fitness for individual games will be decided by the Commissioner and/or Umpire-in-Chief.

**Sec. 6 REGULATION GAME:** The game shall consist of seven (7) innings: A regulation game officially begins when the defensive team has taken the field and the umpire indicates (verbally or physically) “play ball.” A full seven (7) innings need not be played if the home team (the team second at bat) scores more runs in six innings or before the third out of the seventh inning.

**EXCEPTION:** *If the umpire, commissioner and/or coaches make the decision to stop play, regular season games will be counted as a regulation game after 5 innings of play (4½ if the home team has more runs), umpire must verify innings played with both coaches, if a game is stopped prior to completing a regulation game and the season schedule allows for a make-up game, the make-up game shall be restarted and played as a new game, replaying all innings.*

**NOTE:** *Prior to the 5th inning and if darkness is in play, both coaches or league commissioners must meet to agree to call “last inning”*

**NOTE:** *The umpire or league commissioners has the right to stop play, even if the coaches disagree.*

- a. During the regular season double header play of the first game (6pm start), teams will not be allowed start a new inning after 7:15 pm. The second game must start no later than 7:30pm.
- b. A game that is tied at the end of seven innings shall be continued by playing additional innings; or until one side has scored more runs in their half of the inning before the third out is made.
- c. The umpire and/or coaches are empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic or other causes that places the patrons or players in peril.

**NOTE:** *The umpires or league commissioners have the right to stop play even if the coaches disagree.*

- d. These provisions do not apply to any acts on the part of the players or spectators, which might call for the forfeiture of the game. The umpire may forfeit the game if attacked physically by any team member or spectator.
- e. The umpire shall forfeit a game in favor of a team not at fault in the following cases:
  - (1) If a team fails to appear on the field at the time the team is scheduled to play.
  - (2) If after the game has started, one team refuses to continue play.
  - (3) If after the umpire has suspended the game, one side fails to resume playing within two minutes after the umpire has called “play ball”.
  - (4) If a team uses tactics to delay or to hasten the game.
  - (5) If, after being warned by the umpire, any one of the rules is willfully violated.
  - (6) If the order for the removal of a player or manager/coach, from the game, is not obeyed within one minute.
  - (7) If because of the removal of a player by the umpire, or for any reason, there are less than 8 players on the team.
  - (8) The score of a forfeited game will be counted as win for the winning team and a loss for the losing team with no runs awarded to either team.
- f. Teams are not required to replay regular season games if regulation or official determination was not made.
- g. During all Tournament play only, in the event of rain or any other causes, which interrupts a game, the game must be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped, unless the teams mutually agree to accept the existing score as the final score.
- h. In the event that a Tournament game cannot be completed, an official game may be called after 5 innings of play or 4 ½ innings of play, if the home team is ahead.

**Sec. 7 RUN LIMIT:**

- a. **REGULAR SEASON PLAY:** Each team is eligible to score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning. Once seven runs are earned in the inning that half of the inning is completed, and the game must progress.

**EXCEPTION:** *There is no run limit during the 7<sup>th</sup> inning.*

- b. **15 RUN RULE: (regular season only)** If a team is ahead by fifteen (15) or more runs by the end of the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) inning, the game is determined to be complete, unless the team that is behind chooses to continue play and time allows for continued play.
- c. **TOURNAMENT PLAY:** There is no run limit per inning. If a team is ahead by ten (10) or more runs by the end of the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) inning, the game is determined to be complete.

**Sec. 8 THE WINNER:** The winner of the game shall be the team that scores the most runs in a regulation game.

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

**Sec. 9 LAST OUT RUNS NOT SCORED:** A run shall not be scored if a preceding runner has been declared the third out of an inning, nor shall a run be scored if the third out of the inning is a result of:

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

**Sec. 10 CROSSING RUNNERS:** A base runner shall not score a run ahead of the base runner preceding him/her in the batting order, if the preceding runner has not been put out.

**RULING:** "Preceding Runner" is out.

## **Sec. 11 HOME RUN LIMITS**

The "one-up" home run rule is in effect. Any additional home runs above the "one-up" will be scored as an out.

**EXCEPTION:** *In-the-park home runs are exempt from the "one-up" rule.*

**EXAMPLE:** *If Team A hits a homerun, then team B must hit a homerun before Team A hits another one. Otherwise, Team A is charged with an out.*

## **RULE 6 – PITCHING REGULATIONS**

**Sec. 1 PITCHING POSITION:** The pitcher shall take a position with one or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate.

- a. Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher must come to a full stop with the ball held in the pitching hand or both hands in front of the body.
- b. This position must be maintained at least one (1) second and not more than five (5) seconds before making the delivery.
- c. The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is positioned behind the plate.

**Sec. 2 THE PITCH:** The pitch starts when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of his/her wind-up, after the required pause. Prior to the required pause, any wind up may be used. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the ball leaves the hand. A legal delivery shall be delivered with an underhand motion:

- a. The hand shall be below the hip.
- b. The ball must be delivered with an arc and reach a height of at least 6 feet from the ground, while not exceeding a maximum height of 10 feet from the ground. The umpire will make the discretion by calling "flat" if under 6 feet or "too high" if over 10 feet to alert the batter.

**EXCEPTION:** *If the batter chooses to still swing at the pitch, the pitch is considered legal in height and if hit in fair territory, the ball is "live".*

- c. The catcher must be within the designated catcher's box/area until the pitched ball hits the strike mat or until the ball is batted.

**RULING:** The ball is dead; a ball is called on the batter, and a warning given to the catcher and the defensive coach that if the catcher repeats such an act after this warning, they will be removed from the catcher's position for the remainder of that game.

- d. The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch, except after a strike out or put out made by the catcher.
- f. Any action or motion, by the pitcher (i.e. stops or pauses in the pitching motion or fakes a pitch or any other illegal action prior to the release of the pitch) while on or off the pitching rubber shall result in:

**RULING:** Dead ball, a ball shall be called on the batter. These acts are considered illegal pitches.

**EXCEPTION:** *If time is called or a foreign object or non-player enters the playing field, the ball is determined "dead" and the pitch shall be replayed.*

- g. The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll or bounce the ball to the batter, either on or off the pitching rubber.
- h. The pitcher shall not at any time during the game, be allowed to use tape or other substances on the ball, the

pitching hand or fingers; nor shall any other player apply a foreign substance to the ball. Under the supervision of the umpire, powdered resin may be used to dry the hands. The pitcher may wear a sweatband on the pitching hand (wrist or above).

**RULING:** For any illegal pitch, the ball is dead. A ball shall be called on the batter and the base runners do not advance.

**EXCEPTION:** *If a batter swings at any illegal pitch, the pitch is then legal and play call resumes as normal (strike, foul or hit).*

**NOTE:** *The umpire shall not or will not give a vocal warning, or a delayed dead ball signal, to the batter on an illegally pitched ball. An umpire will declare "Dead Ball, No Pitch" on any illegal pitching action. These are illegal actions by the pitcher, prior to the release of the pitched ball. A pitched ball that hits the ground or home plate is a dead ball and may not be hit by the batter.*

- i. For female batters, the ball must be switched to the regulation 11" diameter ball.

**RULING:** The ball is dead; the girls ball must be switched.

- j. Infielders must be positioned on the dirt until the ball crosses the plate for female batters (based on field layout with dirt infield and grass outfield)

**RULING:** If an infielder is deemed to be on the grass before the ball crosses the plate, and the ball is fair, the female batter will be awarded 1st base. If foul, the pitch will be deemed a ball.

**Sec. 3 WIND-UP:** The pitcher may use any wind-up desired providing:

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

**Sec. 4 WARM-UP:** At the beginning of any inning following the first inning or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than 1 minute may be used to deliver warm up pitches to the catcher or other teammate. Play shall be suspended during this time.

**Sec. 5 NO PITCH:** A No Pitch shall be declared when:

- a. The pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
- b. The runner is called out for leaving the base too soon.
- c. The pitcher pitches before a base runner has retouched his/her base after a foul ball and the ball is dead.
- d. The ball slips from the pitcher's hand during his/her wind-up or during the backswing.
- e. No player, manager or coach shall call "Time," employ any other word or phrase, or commit any act while the ball is live and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.

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

**Sec. 6 CONFERENCE:** There shall be only one charged conference between the coach or other team representative from the dugout, with each and every pitcher in an inning. The second charged conference shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position.

**Sec. 7 QUESTIONING:** At no time during the game shall an offensive or defensive player or coach be allowed to leave their positions on the field or come from the dugouts to argue whether a pitch was a strike or a ball. The three players involved (pitcher, catcher, batter) may be allowed to question balls or strikes.

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

## **RULE 7 – BATTING**

**Sec. 1 THE AT-BAT:** The batter shall take an appropriate position within the designated batter's box/area.

- a. The batter shall not have his/her entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box/area or touching home plate when the ball is hit.

- b. The batter shall not step directly across in front of the catcher to the other side of the batter's box while the pitcher is in position to pitch.
- a. The batter is not allowed to take a "walking swing" and must have at least one foot constantly contacting the ground when the ball is released from the pitcher's hand.
- d. If there is not a designated batter's box, the batter must be able to touch the opposite edge of home plate with the bat, holding it with both hands, while in his/her batting stance. If there is any question, the umpire may request proof-by-action. If the batter is unable to perform the requested task, he/she will be required to alter his/her batting stance in order to be in compliance and a warning will be issued. If subsequent violations occur, the batter will be called "out", the ball will be determined "dead" and base runners may not advance.

**RULING:** (Sec. 1 a-d) The ball is dead, the batter is out, base runners may not advance.

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

**RULING:** The opposing team has the option of taking the result of the play or, the ball is dead, the batter is out and base runners may not advance.

- f. The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an altered bat.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, the batter is out, and without warning, is ejected from the game. Base runners may not advance.

- g. The batter must take his/her position within seven (7) seconds after the umpire has signaled, "play ball". He/she must have both feet within the designated batter's box/area before the start of the pitch.

**RULING:** The ball is dead. The umpire will call a strike on the batter.

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

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

- a. If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter takes his/her place and legally assumes any balls and strikes.
- b. If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has batted, and before the next pitch to the following batter, the player who should have batted is determined out. Any advance or score made because of a batted ball by the improper batter's advance to 1st base on a hit, error or a base on balls shall be nullified. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat.
- c. If the error is discovered after the first pitch to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal, all runs scored and bases run are legal and the next batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No one is called out for failure to bat. Players who have not batted and who have not been called out have lost their turn at bat until reached again in the regular order.
- d. No base runner shall be removed from the base he/she is occupying to bat in his/her proper place. He/she merely misses his/her turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following him/her in the batting order becomes the legal batter.
- e. When the third out of the inning is made before the batter has completed his/her turn at bat, he/she shall be the first batter in the next inning and shall have the ball and strike count on him/her canceled.

**Sec. 3 INTERFERENCE:** Members of the team at bat shall not interfere, either physically or vocally, with a player attempting to field either a fair or foul ball. This includes a base coach.

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

**Sec. 4 DOUBLE HITS:** The batter shall not hit a fair ball a second time with the bat in fair territory.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, the batter is out and base runners may not advance.

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

**NOTE:** *If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the batter is not out and the ball is alive and in play.*

**Sec. 5 STRIKES:** A strike is called by the umpire:

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

**RULING:** Sec. 5, d-g, The ball is dead and base runners must return to their bases without liability to be put out.

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

**Sec. 6 BALLS:** A ball is called by the umpire, the ball is dead, and runners may not advance:

- a. For each pitch, which does not enter the strike zone, or touches home plate, which is not hit or swung at by the batter.
- b. For each illegally pitched ball not hit or swung at by the batter.
- c. When a pitch hits the batter outside of the strike zone.
- d. When the pitcher fails to pitch within five (5) seconds.
- e. For each excessive warm-up pitch.
- f. When the pitcher attempts a quick return pitch, an "Illegal Pitch" and ball called unless swung at.

**Sec. 7 FAIR BALLS:** A fair ball is a legally batted ball which:

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

**RULING:** This section (a-e) The ball is in play and base runners are entitled to advance any number of bases with liability to be put out. The batter becomes a base runner unless the infield fly rule applies.

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

**Sec. 8 FOUL BALLS:** A foul ball is a legally batted ball which:

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

**RULING:** This Section (a-d) The ball is dead. A strike is called on the batter for each foul ball, including the third strike. Base runners must return to their bases without liability to be put out.

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

**Sec. 9 THE BATTER IS OUT:**

- a. When the 3rd strike is struck at, missed and touches any part of the batter's person.
- b. When a batter appears in the batter's box/area with, or is discovered using an altered bat or a non-approved bat, prior to or after hitting the ball. The batter is also ejected from the game for using an altered or non-approved bat.
- c. When a fly ball is legally caught.
- d. Immediately when he/she hits an infield fly, and the umpire has declared "Infield Fly". Refer to Infield Fly Rule.
- e. If a fielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball, including a line drive, which can be caught by an infielder with

ordinary effort with 1st, 1st & 2nd, 1st & 3rd or 1st, 2nd & 3rd bases occupied with less than 2 outs.

**RULING:** The ball is dead, the batter is out and base runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the pitch. This does not apply to an infield fly; the dropped ball remains alive on an infield fly.

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

- f. If a preceding runner, in the umpire's judgment, intentionally interferes with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball, or is attempting to throw a ball in an attempt to complete a play, the preceding runner and the batter are both declared out.
- g. When the batter bunts or chops the ball downward.
- h. Any batter-runner that carries the bat and touches first base.
- i. On a third strike foul ball.
- j. When hit by his/her own-batted ball, in fair territory, outside the batter's box/area.

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

- k. When any part of the batter's foot is in front of, touching, or behind home plate when he/she hits the ball.

#### **Sec. 10 ON-DECK BATTER:**

- a. The on-deck batter is the offensive player whose name follows the name of the batter in the batting order.
- b. The on-deck batter shall take a safe position within the lines of either of the on-deck areas without interfering with the view of any manager or coach, nor interfering with the play in progress.
- c. The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck area when he/she becomes the batter, or to direct base runners advancing from 3rd base to home plate.
- d. When the on-deck batter interferes with the defensive player's opportunity to make a play on a runner, the runner closest to home plate, at the time of the interference, is declared out.
- e. The provision of Rule 7, Sec. 3 shall apply to the on-deck batter.
- f. It is *recommended* that the on-deck batter or umpire retrieve the previous batter's bat in a safe and appropriate manner.
  - (1) Third base must not be occupied and there must not be any play being made at the plate.
  - (2) There must not be any interference with any play or disruption of the umpire's view of the game. The bat is considered a part of the playing field and no penalty is to be issued if the live ball contacts the bat while lying on the ground.
  - (3) If appropriate, the bat needs to be removed for safety issues related to base runners.

## **RULE 8 – BASE RUNNING**

**Sec. 1 BASE ADVANCEMENT:** The base runner must touch bases in legal order; that is 1st, 2nd, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Home Plate.

- a. When a base runner must return to bases while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.

**RULING:** The ball is in play and base runners must return with liability to be put out.

- b. When a base runner acquires the right to a base, by touching it before being put out, he/she may hold the base until he/she has legally touched the next base in order, or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding runner.
- c. When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position neither he/she nor the succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position. The ball is in play and runners may advance with liability of being put out.
- d. A base runner may not run the bases in reverse order, either to confuse the fielders, or to make a travesty of the game.

**RULING:** The ball is dead and the runner is out.

**NOTE:** *A runner in a double play situation, who stops or retreats back towards the base left, is not to be considered as running the bases in reverse order or considered making a travesty of the game.*

- e. Two base runners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.

**RULING:** The runner who first legally occupied the base is entitled to it. The other may runner return to his/hers last touched base, but can be put out if tagged with the ball.

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

**Sec. 2 THE BATTER BECOMES A BATTER-BASE RUNNER:**

- a. As soon as he/she hits the ball.
- b. When the umpire has called four (4) balls
- c. When the catcher obstructs or any other fielder obstructs or hinders the batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball.
  - (1) The umpire will signal, “delayed dead ball”.
  - (2) The offensive team coach has the option of taking the base awarded the batter for catcher’s obstruction, or he/she may take the result of the play.
  - (3) If the batter reaches 1st base safely and all other runners advance at least one base on the batted ball, catchers obstruction is cancelled and no other options are given.
- d. When a fair ball strikes the umpire or base runner on fair territory:
  - (1) If the ball hits the umpire or base runner after passing an infielder, other than the pitcher or touches an infielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.
  - (2) If the ball hits the umpire or base runner before passing an infielder, the ball is dead and the batter is entitled to 1st base without liability of being put out. Runners not forced by the batter-runner must return.

**EXCEPTION:** *When the determination is made that there is a substitute or pinch-runner. See the definitions section for clarification of a pinch-runner.*

**Sec. 3 IMPROPER BASE RUNNING:** A player forfeits his/her exemption from liability to be put out:

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

**Sec. 4 BASE ADVANCEMENT WITH JEOPARDY:** Base runners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out:

- a. When the ball is thrown into fair territory or foul territory and is not blocked.
- b. When the ball is batted into fair territory and is not blocked.
- c. When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
- d. If a fair ball strikes an umpire or a runner after passing an infielder other than the pitcher, or having been touched by an infielder, including the pitcher, the ball shall be in play.

**Sec. 5 ADVANCEMENT WITHOUT JEOPARDY:** Base runners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out:

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

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

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

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

- (2) If no play is being made on the obstructed runner at the time of obstruction, the play shall proceed until the play is completed. The umpire shall call "time" and impose such penalties, if any, as in his/her judgment, will nullify the act of obstruction.

- (3) If a fielder, without the ball, fakes a tag, the umpire may award the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction, the bases they would have reached, had there been no obstruction.

**NOTE:** *In the case of a "fake tag", the fielder will be provided a warning. If there are any subsequent violations, the player will be automatically ejected from the game.*

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

**NOTE:** *The umpire(s) will signal, "delayed dead-ball".*

**RULING:** The runner shall be entitled to three (3) bases if a batted ball or two (2) bases if a thrown ball. In either case runners may advance further at their own risk. If the illegal act was made on a fair ball that, in the judgment of the umpire, would have cleared the outfield fence in flight, a home run shall be awarded.

- e. When the ball is in play and is overthrown, or by loss of possession the ball enters a dead ball area, or is blocked from the defensive team by the offensive team.

**RULING:** All calls under sections 5(e)1-3 and 5(f) are subject ***only*** to the judgment of the Umpires on the field of play at the time of the call, and are not subject to any protest or further review even if requested by coaches and/or players.

***Umpires reserve the right, but are not required, to review any play with each other before making an official call.***

- (1) The ball is in a dead ball area, In all cases where a ball, travels out of fair territory, goes into the spectators seats, goes over through or under any fence surrounding the playing field; hits any person or object not engaged in the game; goes into the players benches, including bats lying near benches, whether the ball rebounds back onto the playing field or not after touching a dead ball area, or the umpire simply rules the ball is dead.
- (2) When an overthrow is made by any fielder and the ball enters a dead ball area or when any fielder loses possession of the ball, such as on an attempted tag and the ball enters a dead ball area, the base runner/runners will be awarded the base he/she is advancing towards plus one additional base.

**RULING:** Awarded bases shall be determined by the position of the base runners at the time of the throw or loss of possession regardless of the **base runners' direction**. If a runner is still on base (touching) at the time of the throw or loss of possession he/she shall only be awarded the next base unless the advancement of the base runner behind him/her forces him/her to advance an additional base. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.

- (3) For offensive players/equipment causing a ball to enter a dead ball area, or be blocked from a defensive player, **the base runner** closest to home plate is declared out, and all other runners must return to the last base touched, penalty shall be determined by the position of the base runners when the ball was contacted by the offensive players/equipment.

- f. If a ball contacts a defensive player unintentionally or intentionally that causes the ball to enter

a dead ball area, the ball is dead and all base runners are awarded the base he/she is advancing towards plus one additional base.

**RULING:** Awarded bases shall be determined by the position of the base runners at the time of the contact regardless of the base runners direction. If a runner is still on base (touching) at the time of the contact he/she shall only be awarded the next base unless the advancement of the base runner behind him/her forces him/her to advance an additional base. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.

**EXCEPTION** - in the event of "catch and carry", rule #9, section #1, subsection w will be in effect.

**Sec. 6 RETURNING TO BASE:** A base runner must return to his/her base:

- a. When a foul ball is illegally caught and so declared by the umpire.
- b. When the umpire declares an illegally batted ball.
- c. When a batter or base runner is called out for interference. Other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.
- d. When a pitched ball that is swung at and missed touches any part of the batters' person.
- e. When a foul ball is not caught.

**RULING:** The ball is dead and base runners must return to last base occupied prior to the pitch except when forced by the batter becoming a base runner. Base runners need not touch the intervening bases in returning, but must return promptly; however, they must be allowed sufficient time to return.

- f. Base stealing. Under no circumstances is a runner permitted to steal a base when a pitched ball is not batted.

**Sec. 7 BATTER-BASE RUNNER IS OUT:**

- a. When, after hitting a fair ball, he/she is legally touched with the ball before he/she touches 1st base.
- b. When after hitting a fair ball, the ball is held by a fielder touching 1<sup>st</sup> base with any part of his/her person, before the batter-base runner touches 1st base.
- c. When, after a fly ball is hit, a fielder catches the ball before it touches the ground or any object other than a fielder.
- d. When, after hitting a fair ball or a base on balls is awarded, he/she fails to advance to the next base.

**RULING:** The ball is in play and the batter-base runner is out.

- e. When he/she runs on the inside of the baseline, and in the judgment of the umpire, interferes with the fielder taking the throw at 1st base; however, he/she may run within 3 feet of the baseline in foul territory to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
- f. When he/she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, or *intentionally* interferes with a thrown ball. If the interference, in the judgment of the umpire, is an attempt to prevent a double play, the base runner closest to home plate shall be called out. Base runners must make an attempt to slide or get out of the way, if the defense has the possibility of making a double-play.
- g. When a batter-runner interferes with a play at home in an attempt to prevent an obvious out at home plate, the runner is also out.
- h. When he/she moves back towards home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder.
- i. When he/she is discovered using an altered or illegal bat, all base runners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.
- j. When he/she throws the bat while batting, a warning shall be given by the umpire. If a subsequent violation occurs, the batter-runner will be called out.

**Sec. 8 THE BASE RUNNER IS OUT:**

- a. When, in running to any base, he/she runs more than 3 feet from a direct line between that base and the next base in regular or reverse order to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder. When a play, such as a rundown, is made on a runner who has "rounded" a base, and that runner is outside of a direct line between bases, the runner establishes his/her base path as a direct line between him/her and the next base in regular or reverse order.
- b. When, while the ball is in play, he/she is legally touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder while not in contact with a base.
- c. When, on a force out, a fielder tags him/her with the ball or tags the base on a force out.
- d. When the base runner fails to return to touch the base he/she previously occupied when play is resumed after

suspension of play.

- e. When a base runner physically passes a preceding runner before that runner has been put out.
- f. When the base runner leaves his/her base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has been touched by a fielder, provided the ball is returned to a fielder and legally held on that base, or a fielder legally touches the base runner before he/she returns to his/her base.
- g. When the base runner fails to touch the intervening base or bases, in regular or reverse order, and the ball is in play and legally held on that base; or the base runner is legally touched while off the base he/she missed.
- h. When the batter-runner legally over runs 1st base attempts to run to 2<sup>nd</sup> base and is legally touched while off the base.
- i. In running or sliding for home plate, he/she fails to touch home plate and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in his/her hand while touching home plate and appeals to the umpire for a decision.

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

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

**RULING:** The ball is dead and the base runner is out. Other runners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.

- t. When a defensive player has the ball and is waiting for the runner and the runner remains on his feet and deliberately, with force, crashes into the defensive player, the runner is declared out. The ball is dead and all runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.
  - 1. It is the base-runner's responsibility to avoid contact with the defensive players.
  - 2. It is the fielder's responsibility to be appropriately positioned on the field of play when not holding or receiving the ball. The base path must be vacated if there is no play.
  - 3. Base runners must slide or avoid contacting all fielders with any level of force.
  - 4. Base runners must not deliberately attempt to knock the ball out of a fielder's glove. This act will

be treated as interference.

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

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

#### **Sec. 9 BASE RUNNER IS NOT OUT:**

- a. When a base runner runs behind or in front of a fielder and **outside** the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder who is attempting to field the ball in the base-path. At least one of the base runner's feet must be within three (3) feet of the baseline if there as any potential play.
- b. When a base runner does not run a direct line to the base, providing the fielder, in the direct line, does not have the ball in his/her possession.
- c. When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball, and the base runner comes into contact with the one who, in the umpire's judgment, was not entitled to field the ball.
- d. When a base runner is hit with a fair-batted ball that has passed through an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the judgment of the umpire, no other fielder has a chance to make a play on the ball.
- e. When a base runner is touched with a ball not securely held by a fielder.
- f. When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play, until after the next pitch.
- g. When a batter-runner over runs 1st base, after touching it, and makes no attempt to advance to the next base.
- h. When the base runner is not given sufficient time to return to a base, he/she shall not be called out for being off the base before the pitcher pitches the ball. The umpire shall call no pitch.
- i. When a runner, who has legally started to advance, cannot be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitching plate, nor by stepping on the plate with the ball in his/her possession.
- j. When a base runner holds his/her base until a fly ball touches a fielder, and then attempts to advance.
- k. When a runner is in contact with the base, and is hit by a batted ground ball or fly ball in fair territory, the base runner is not out and the ball is dead. All runners advance one (1) base if forced.
- l. When a base runner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper place and, in the umpire's judgment, the runner would have been safe.
- m. When a fielder makes a play on a batter or base runner while using an illegal glove.
- n. When a fair-batted ball hits the base runner, after it touches any fielder, including the pitcher.

## **RULE 9 – DEAD BALL – BALL IN PLAY**

#### **Sec. 1 THE BALL IS DEAD AND NOT IN PLAY:**

- a. When the ball is batted illegally.
- b. When a batter steps from one box to another when the pitcher is ready to pitch.
- c. When a ball is pitched illegally.
  - EXCEPTION:** *If the batter swings at an illegal pitch, the play stands.*
- d. When the umpire declares "No Pitch".
- e. When a pitched ball touches any part of the batter's person or clothing, whether or not the batter swings.
- f. When a foul ball is not caught.
- g. When a base runner is called out for leaving a base too soon on a pitched ball.
- h. When the offensive team causes interference.
- i. When the ball is outside the playing limits of the playing field. A ball is considered "out of play" when it touches the ground, person on the ground or object outside the playing area.
- j. When an accident to a runner prevents him/her from proceeding to a base, which he/she is awarded. A substitute runner shall be permitted for the injured player.
- k. In case of interference with the batter or fielder.

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

**EXCEPTION: Catch and carry** is allowed for legally batted balls. All players must catch the ball with both feet inside the out of play lines. If a player makes a catch in foul territory and his momentum carries him out of play after making the catch, the batter is out, the ball remains live as long as the ball is in view of the umpire, and all base runners may advance at their own risk. If the player fails to make the catch, or catches the ball in out of play territory, the ball shall be ruled foul in accordance with Rule 7 (Batting), Section 8 (Foul Balls).

- x. When a foul ball is caught, and the batter has 2 strikes.
- y. When a batter is hit with his/her own-batted ball, in fair territory, outside the batter's box.
- z. When a fair ball strikes an umpire or base runner on fair territory before passing or touching an infielder.

## **Sec. 2 THE BALL IS IN PLAY:**

- a. At the start of each half inning, when the pitcher has the ball in the pitching position and the umpire has called or signaled, "Play Ball".
- b. When the infield fly rule is enforced.
- c. When a thrown ball goes past a fielder and remains in playable territory.
- d. When a fair ball strikes an umpire or base runner on fair territory after passing or touching an infielder.
- e. When a fair ball strikes an umpire in fair territory.
- f. When the base runners have reached the bases, which they are entitled, when the fielder illegally fields a batted or thrown ball.
- g. When a base runner is called out for passing a preceding runner.
- h. When no play is being made on an obstructed runner. The ball shall remain alive until the play is over.
- i. When the batter legally hits a fair ball.
- j. When a base runner must return, in reverse order, while the ball is already in play.
- k. When a base runner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out.
- l. When a base is dislodged while runners are running the bases.
- m. When a runner runs out of the baseline in regular or reverse order to avoid a tag by a fielder.
- n. When a runner is forced or tagged out.
- o. When the umpire calls the base runner out for failure to return and touch the base when play is resumed, after a suspension of play.
- p. When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.
- q. If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and in the judgment of the umpire, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball. The batter is not out and the ball is alive and in play.
- r. When a thrown ball strikes an umpire.
- s. When a thrown ball strikes a coach.
- t. As long as there is a play as a result of the hit by the batter. This would include an immediate live ball appeal before the umpire has called "time". Once the umpire has called "time" however, the ball remains dead

during a subsequent appeal play.

u. When a foul ball is caught, and the batter has less than 2 strikes.

v. While during a play in progress, in the judgment of the umpire, a coach touches or physically helps a runner.

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

**Sec. 3 THE BALL REMAINS ALIVE** until the umpire calls “time”, which should be done when the ball is held by a player in the infield area, and in the judgment of the umpire, all play has ceased.

## **RULE 10 – UMPIRES**

**NOTE:** *Failure of umpires to adhere to this Rule shall not be grounds for appeals. These are guidelines for the umpires. Coaches/Managers are responsible for providing competent/qualified umpires for the games their team has been designated to officiate. Scheduling a minimum of two (2) umpires per game is **highly** recommended.*

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

**NOTE:** *An umpire shall not be a member of either team (i.e. player, coach, officer scorekeeper or sponsor) unless approved by both coaches in the absence of an umpire. Team up to bat shall provide a stand-in umpire, if none are available.*

- a. Umpires will enforce rules by communicating with the acting coach and/or manager of the team in violation.
- b. The umpire should inspect the playing field, equipment, and clarify all ground rules to both teams and managers/coaches prior to the start of the game.
- c. Each umpire shall have the power to make decisions on violations committed anytime during playing time or suspension of play until the game is over.
- d. No umpire has the authority to set aside or question decisions made by another umpire within the limits of his/her respective duties.
- e. An umpire may consult with his/her partners at any time; however, the final decision shall rest with the umpire whose authority it is to make the decision and who requested the opinion of the other umpires.
- f. The plate and base umpires shall have equal authority to:
  - (1) Call a runner out for leaving a base too soon.
  - (2) Call “time” for suspension of play.
  - (3) Remove a player, manager, coach or other team member from the game for violation of the rules.
- g. Unless the umpire actually witnesses any play in question and can make an accurate determination, he must leave the play as it stands.

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

### **Sec. 2 THE PLATE UMPIRE:**

- a. Shall take a position behind the catcher and have full responsibility for the proper conduct of the game.
- b. Shall call all balls and strikes.
- c. Shall be in agreement and in cooperation with the base umpire(s) call on plays, fair or foul balls, legally or illegally caught balls. On plays, which require the base umpire to leave the infield, the plate umpire shall assume the duties that the base umpire is normally required to cover.
- d. Shall determine and declare whether a batter chops or bunts a ball, whether a batted ball touches the person or clothing of the batter, and also whether a fly ball is an infield fly.
- e. Shall determine when a game is forfeited.
- f. Shall assume the base umpire decisions, if there is not a base umpire.

### **Sec. 3 THE BASE UMPIRE:**

- a. Shall take (an) appropriate position(s) on the playing field.
- b. Shall assist the plate umpire in every way, to enforce the rules of the game. Each base umpires’ duties shall

be discussed and determined by the umpires involved before the game begins.

c. Can call an Infield Fly.

**Sec. 4 CHANGING OF UMPIRE:** Umpires are *strongly encouraged* not to change during a game, unless injury or illness incapacitates him/her.

**Sec. 5 UMPIRES JUDGMENT:**

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

**EXCEPTION:** *If in the deciding umpire's judgment, he/she made an inaccurate call related to a player being out or safe, he/she may immediately reverse the call. This is not a point to be appealed by either team. Umpires should use this exception only when fully convinced of the error and without the persuasion of anyone else.*

b. No decision of an umpire shall be reversed, except when he/she is convinced it is in violation of a rule. If the coach, captain or either team does not seek reversal of a decision based solely on a point of rules, the umpire whose decision is in question, shall, if in doubt, confer with his/her associates before taking any action.

c. But under no circumstances shall any player or person, other than the coach or captain of either team, have any legal right to appeal any decision and seek its reversal on a claim that it is in conflict with these rules.

d. Under no circumstances should any umpire seek to reverse a decision made by his/her associates; nor shall any umpire criticize or interfere with the duties of his/her associates, unless asked to do so.

**Sec. 6 SUSPENSION OF PLAY:**

a. An umpire may suspend play when, in his/her judgment, conditions justify such action.

b. Play shall be suspended when the plate umpire leaves his/her position to brush the plate or to perform other duties not directly related with the calling of a play.

c. The umpire shall suspend play whenever the batter or pitcher steps out of position for a legitimate reason.

d. The umpire shall not call "Time" after the pitcher has started his/her pitching motion, or while play is in progress. "Time" shall not be called until **all** action, in progress by either team, has been completed.

**EXCEPTION:** *If there is a safety concern, play may be suspended at any time by the umpire(s).*

e. When, in the judgment of the umpire, all immediate play is apparently completed should he/she call "Time".

**Sec. 7 VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES:**

a. Players, managers, coaches or other team members shall not make disparaging or insulting remarks to, or about any opposing players, officials or spectators; or commit other acts that could be considered **unsportsmanlike conduct**.

b. The penalty for violations by a player is prompt removal of the offender from the game and grounds. For the first violation, the coaches will be warned. The second offense, the player is removed from the game. The offender shall immediately leave the area and/or grounds. Failure to do so will warrant a forfeiture of the game.

c. Any player or coach that leaves his/her position on the field, including the dugout, to argue balls and strikes, or to argue whether a batter stepped on or over home plate, will receive a warning. Any subsequent offenses will result in immediate ejection. A neutral umpire or league commissioner has the authority to eject an offender from the game on a first offense, if appropriate.

d. No player or coach in the field of play will be allowed to have, use, operate, any type of electronic device such as cell phone, MP3, tablets, etc, any use of these type of devices that occurs during play or in anyway interferes with play will result in immediate ejection from game.

**Note:** *Running off the field to answer your phone during an inning is not allowed.*