

**WEBSTER
ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION**

**Softball Rules
and Regulations**

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Revisions in Shaded Text

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1 Rules Hierarchy

Official playing rules and regulations of the current ASA Softball Rules are to be followed. WAA Girls' Softball League Rules will supersede the current ASA Rule Book when so stated.

2 The League

2.1 Team Formation / Draft process

2.1.1 Team formation: (All leagues except Major and Senior Leagues)

Teams are formed by the WAA board. The League will honor specific team requests in the Minor, Mini Minor, and Little Slugger Divisions whenever possible.

2.1.2 Team formation: (Major and Senior Leagues Only)

Head Coach - Each team shall have one head coach. The head coach is a volunteer who is responsible for the direction and control of the team. The board will select and appoint head coaches.

Assistant Coaches - Volunteer assistant coaches may be selected by the head coach or appointed by the board. There is no limit to the number of assistant coaches allowed per team, however the league will provide a limit of two coaches shirts per team.

Players -Draft System: The Draft is done in the Major and Senior leagues with the selection of known players who will have been rated the previous year as pitchers, catchers, and overall players.

All players entering a Division for the first time will be placed on a team through the "Draft".

The only way a player may be placed on a team without being drafted is if their parent or guardian is the head coach, assistant coach, or team liaison of the team.

However, no team shall have more than three players who have been placed in this manner on its roster (Exception: siblings).

A player may choose to play on a team with a sibling, provided the team is in her appropriate age group.

Players entering a division after the draft has been concluded will be placed on a team at the discretion of the Board based on the needs of the League.

3 The Season

3.1 Starting Times

3.1.1 Game start time is 6:30 PM weekdays and as scheduled on Saturdays.

3.1.2 **Seniors and Majors:** There is no grace period. A forfeit will be declared against a team not ready to play by 6:30 PM.

Note: Keep the two hour time rule in mind when starting games.

3.2 Regulation Team Size (Official Team)

3.2.1 Seniors and Majors.

A team must be able to field a minimum of eight (8) players to constitute an official team.

If a team cannot field at least 8 players for any reason during a game, the game will end at that point and must be forfeited to the opposing team. A game may be played, but will not count in standings. This applies to regular season and tournament play.

3.2.2 All other leagues may play with any number of players.

3.3 Make-up Games

3.3.1 Seniors and Majors.

A Manager unable to field an Official Team (8 players) for a game, may request to have the game rescheduled.

All requests for rescheduling must be made to the League Commissioner within a minimum of **48 hours** prior to the scheduled game.

All decisions rendered by the League Commissioner will be final. (No Appeal)

3.3.2 **Rain Outs:** The League Commissioner shall make cancellations due to weather or field conditions. Games rescheduled due to weather or field condition must be played at a time scheduled by the League.

3.4 Game Preliminaries

3.4.1 Home team shall occupy the 1st base side of the field.

3.4.2 Teams will field ten (10) players defensively.

3.4.3 No casts of any kind allowed during games.

3.4.4 The wearing of jewelry IS **NOT** ALLOWED during games. Covering jewelry with tape or Band-Aids etc. is not allowed.

3.4.5 **Winning team must** update WAA Website of game results within 24 hours of completed game or risk the game being recorded as a tie. (Major and Senior leagues only).

3.4.6 **Seniors and Majors:** Lineup card will be made available to the opposing team prior to the start of the game.

3.5 Umpires

3.5.1 **Senior League** – Supplied by Rochester District Umpires Association.

3.5.2 **Major League** – Supplied by Rochester District Umpires Association.

3.5.3 **Minor League** – Supplied by WAA.

3.5.4 **Mini-Minor League** – Coaches or Volunteer Parents to Umpire.

3.5.5 **Little Slugger** - Coaches or Volunteer Parents to Umpire.

3.6 Coach Responsibilities

3.6.1 Pitcher / Catcher Rating: All head coaches of Senior, Major, and Minor League teams are required to submit evaluation forms for all players (Overall / Pitcher / Catcher). The Evaluation process will be done on the WAA website.

3.7 Length of an Inning (Seniors and Majors)

3.7.1 A six (6) run rule per inning for all divisions with unlimited runs in the last inning for both teams. Last inning may not be the 6th or 7th inning. Due to game duration or darkness the last inning may be earlier in the game. Coaches need to agree before an inning is started that this inning is the last and unlimited runs apply.

3.8 Length of a Game

All regular season games are subject to a **two hour time rule**. A game may progress beyond two hours provided, **No inning shall start after two hours have elapsed from the beginning of the game**. The umpire will determine game start time. Umpires time is official and final. **(Coaches should make note of start time in their game book. *** Darkness is an exception to this rule***)**

- 3.8.1 **Senior:** A game will consist of seven (7) innings; official game is 4 1/2 innings if home team is ahead and 5 innings if the home team is behind.
- 3.8.2 **Major League:** A game will consist of six (6) innings; official game is 3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead and 4 innings if the home team is behind.
- 3.8.3 **Minor League:** A game will consist of five (5) innings.
- 3.8.4 **Mini Minor League:** A game will consist of five (5) innings

3.9 Darkness Rule

ALL LEAGUE'S: If inning cannot be completed due to darkness, the score reverts back to previous inning. If the game ends in a tie, a tie is recorded in the standings. When league standings are considered, a tie situation is better than a loss. **Safety** is the main concern and the Umpire has the final say when darkness becomes an issue. (Note* No inning may begin after two hours have elapsed from the beginning of the game.)

3.10 Participation (All Leagues)

- 3.10.1 No player may sit out more than one (1) consecutive inning. ** An exception is illness or injury. It is the league's intent that ALL GIRLS play an equal amount of time each game.
- 3.10.2 All girls must play a minimum of 2 innings in the infield (1B, 2B, SS, 3B, P, or C) and a minimum of 2 innings in the outfield per game including playoffs. An exception is illness or injury. It is the leagues intention that all girls get to play equal amount of playing time in the infield and outfield positions. Coaches should encourage players to play different position throughout the season.
- 3.10.3 All players present shall bat. The batting order shall consist of all starting players and reserves present at the start of the game.

Players arriving late for a game shall be placed at the bottom of the batting order.

3.11 Equipment and Uniforms

3.11.1 Helmets

All batters, on-deck batters and base runners are required to wear a batter's helmet with a chinstrap.

Minor, Major and Senior Leagues are also required to wear a face shield on the helmet.

- 3.11.2 All catchers are required to wear a helmet, facemask, chest protector, throat protector and knee/shin guards during warm up on and off the field.
- 3.11.3 Each coach will be given an equipment bag. In the bag will include: Softballs (practice and Game balls), Tennis balls (recommended during early practice weeks to teach fundamentals and boost confidence), bats, helmets, first aid bag, and catching equipment.

3.12 Lighting/Thunder

Lightning/Thunder – Starting thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled start of a game, if any lightning is seen or thunder heard, the game is cancelled and will be rescheduled. On weekends, game times will not be pushed back to try and accommodate weather issues. The respective game will be cancelled and the next scheduled game will start on time if conditions permit.

4 Game Rules

4.1 Pitching

4.1.1 Balks will not be called.

4.1.2 Intentional walks or intentional loading of the bases is NOT allowed. All batters must be pitched to.

4.1.3 **Seniors and Majors:** Illegal pitch; automatic ball on batter.

4.1.4 **Minors:** Illegal pitch will not be called.

4.1.5 Warm Up Pitches

Only three (3) pitches for warm up allowed for a pitcher returning from the previous inning.

New pitcher is allowed six (6) pitches (Any time).

4.2 Hitting

4.2.1 On deck batter with bat NOT ALLOWED for Little Slugger, Mini Minor & Minor. Major and Senior leagues can have a on-deck batter. The on-deck circle is located in front of the team on offense. The on-deck batter must face the batter at the plate, at all times. On-deck batters cannot interfere with the offensive or defensive players on the field without penalty.

4.2.2 Hit Batsman: When a pitched ball not swung at nor called a strike touches any part of the batter's person or clothing.

Effect: The ball is dead. The batter is entitled to one base without liability to be put out.

Exception : If no attempt is made to avoid being hit, the batter will not be awarded first base unless it is ball four.

Note: The batter's hands are not a part of the bat.

If the batter is hit anywhere, including the hands, while swinging at a pitch, then the ball is dead and a strike called. If it is strike three, the batter is out. **(Not used in Little Slugger, Mini Minor and Minor)**

4.3 Base Running

4.3.1 Courtesy Runner for the catcher is allowed provided the catcher is on base and there are two outs. Substitutions should be made prior to count on active batters.

4.3.2 "Double First Base" (2003 Rule change)

(Authority - ASA Rule 8-M)

When using the double base at first, the following rules should be enforced:

4.3.2.1 A batted ball hitting the white portion is declared fair and a batted ball hitting the colored portion is declared foul.

- 4.3.2.2 Whenever a play is being made on the batter-runner, the defense must use the white portion and the batter-runner the colored portion. The batter-runner is out when there is a play being made at first base and the batter-runner touches only the white portion, providing the defense appeals prior to the batter-runner returning to first base. Once the runner returns to the white, no appeal can be made.
- 4.3.2.3 On any force out attempt from the foul side of first base, or on an errant throw pulling the defense into foul ground, the defense and the batter-runner can use either the white or colored portion.
- 4.3.2.4 On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield when there is no play being made at the double base, the batter-runner may touch the white or colored portion. Should the batter-runner return, the runner must return to the white portion.
- 4.3.2.5 When tagging up on a fly ball, the white portion must be used.
- 4.3.2.6 On an attempted pickoff play, the runner must return to the white portion.
- 4.3.2.7 If, when using the double base, and there is a force play by an infielder on the batter-runner, who touches only the white portion and collides with the fielder about to catch a thrown ball while on the white.
Effect: Interference is ruled, the ball is dead, the batter-runner is out, and all other runners are returned to the base last occupied at the time of interference.

5 Divisions of Play

5.1 Senior League: 13-16 yrs

- 5.1.1 12" ball
- 5.1.2 Base distance - 60'
- 5.1.3 Pitcher's distance - 40'
- 5.1.4 Stealing allowed (all bases) after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
If runner leaves base prior to ball leaving pitcher's hand, runner is out. (Refer to LL rule 7.13)
- 5.1.5 Dropped Third (3rd) Strike Rule: When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground and there are;
Fewer than two outs and first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch, or
Any time there are two outs.
- 5.1.6 Bunting **is** allowed.
- 5.1.7 Sliding is permitted. Sliding head first while advancing to a base is not permitted (Runner is out). Sliding head first during a run back or pick off situation is allowed. Attempt to slide at home to avoid contact. No collisions allowed (Runner is out).
- 5.1.8 "Look Back Rule": The Look Back Rule will be in effect for all runners when the ball is live, the batter-runner has touched first base or has been declared out, and the pitcher has possession and control of the ball within the pitcher's circle. The pitcher is considered to be in the pitcher's circle when both feet are on or with the lines of the circle.
When a runner is legitimately off a base after a pitch or as a result of a batter completing a turn at bat, and while the pitcher has control of the ball within the circle, the runner may stop once, but then must immediately return to the base or attempt to advance to the next base.

Once the runner stops at a base for any reason, the runner will be declared out if leaving the base.

This also includes a base on balls or dropped third strike.

- 5.1.9 Pitchers allowed 4 innings per game; unlimited innings per week; one (1) pitch constitutes an inning; no restriction on consecutive innings (Pitcher may pitch 4 innings in a row, or every other inning, etc.).

5.2 Major League: 11-12 yrs

5.2.1 11" ball

5.2.2 Base distance - 60'

5.2.3 Pitcher's distance - 40'

5.2.4 Stealing allowed (WAA **Exception** - Stealing of Home Not permitted)

Only can advance one base per steal attempt.

5.2.5 **No** Dropped Third (3rd) Strike Rule.

5.2.6 Bunting is allowed.

5.2.7 Sliding is permitted. Sliding head first while advancing to a base is not permitted (Runner is out). Sliding head first during a run back or pick off situation is allowed. Attempt to slide at home to avoid contact. No collision allowed (Runner is out).

5.2.8 "Look Back Rule": The Look Back Rule will be in effect for all runners when the ball is live, the batter-runner has touched first base or has been declared out, and the pitcher has possession and control of the ball within the pitcher's circle. The pitcher is considered to be in the pitcher's circle when both feet are on or with the lines of the circle.

When a runner is legitimately off a base after a pitch or as a result of a batter completing a turn at bat, and while the pitcher has control of the ball within the circle, the runner may stop once, but then must immediately return to the base or attempt to advance to the next base.

Once the runner stops at a base for any reason, the runner will be declared out if leaving the base.

This also includes a base on balls or dropped third strike.

- 5.2.9 Pitchers allowed 3 innings per game; unlimited innings per week; one (1) pitch constitutes an inning; no restriction on consecutive innings (Pitcher may pitch 3 innings in a row, or every other inning, etc.).

5.3 Minor League: 9-10 yrs

5.3.1 Game philosophy:

Games should be played by the rules.

Score is not kept. Teams will need to track the number of runs per inning, as there is a limit.

League standings are not kept.

Coaches should make no rules exceptions at game time.

5.3.2 Strike zone:

ADHERE TO OFFICIAL STRIKE ZONE DEFINITION *

The strike zone is that space over home plate, which is between the batters armpits and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural stance.

- 5.3.3 11" ball
- 5.3.4 Base distance - 60'
- 5.3.5 Pitcher's distance - 35'
- 5.3.6 No stealing; No lead off; If runner leaves base prior to ball being hit, runner is out.
- 5.3.7 **No Dropped Third (3rd) Strike Rule.**
- 5.3.8 Bunting **is** allowed.
- 5.3.9 Sliding **is** permitted. Sliding head first while advancing to a base is not permitted (Runner is out). Sliding head first during a run back is allowed. Attempt to slide at home to avoid contact. No collision allowed (Runner is out).
- 5.3.10 Pitchers allowed 2 innings per game; unlimited innings per week; one (1) pitch constitutes an inning; no restriction on consecutive innings (Pitcher may pitch 2 innings in a row, or every other inning, etc.).
- 5.3.11 A Pitcher is limited to 4 balls (not 4 pitches) per Batter. When 4 balls are thrown, a Coach from the Batters team will enter and pitch until the Batter either hits the ball in play or strikes out. **NO WALKS**. The youth pitcher remains on the field as a defensive player. The youth pitcher will resume with the following Batter. The process may repeat. If a coach has entered an inning a fourth time to pitch to a batter (regardless of the number of pitchers used), the Coach from the Batter's team will remain in the field and pitch the balance of the inning. The next inning starts with a player pitching to a batter.
- 5.3.12 Base Running: A base runner may not advance beyond the base she is safely at or in the process of advancing to, once the ball is **in the infield** and is in the **control** of a defensive player. Once the ball is in the control of a fielder in the infield, play stops. The transfer of the ball from the fielder to the pitcher is considered a dead ball play and no runner may advance as a result of a misplayed ball to the pitcher. **(Sportsmanship first)**
- 5.3.13 **Max four (4) runs** per inning for all innings. Both teams will bat in all innings (No winner or Loser).
- 5.3.14 Coaches are encouraged to be in the field with their team for instructional purposes.
- 5.3.15 **Infield Fly Rule is not enforced.**

5.4 Mini Minor League: 7-8 yrs

- 5.4.1 Mini Minors will play a progressive format. The first 3 weeks practice, first 2 weeks of game play is in Little Slugger style. Final 4 weeks of game play is in modified Minor style.

Little Slugger Style Rules: (first two weeks)

All players bat every inning. Last player circle the bases even if out is recorded.

Minor Style Rules: (last four weeks)

Four (4) run rule or three (3) outs will end the inning. Batting lineup will need to be used.

- 5.4.2 Game philosophy:

Games should be played by the rules.

Scores are not kept. League standings are not kept.

Coaches should make no rules exceptions at game time.

EXCEPTION: May reduce game length if agreed upon by both coaches.

- 5.4.3 11" incrediball (safety ball)
- 5.4.4 Base distance - 60'
- 5.4.5 Pitcher's distance – Coach Pitch ONLY - Coaches discretion.
- 5.4.6 No stealing; No lead off; If runner leaves base prior to ball being hit, runner is out.
- 5.4.7 Bunting **is not** allowed.
- 5.4.8 Sliding **is** permitted. Sliding head first while advancing to a base is not permitted (Runner is out). Sliding head first during a run back is allowed. Attempt to slide at home to avoid contact. No collisions allowed (Runner is out).
- 5.4.9 Pitching “**NO WALKS or STRIKEOUTS**”: A Coach from the Batters team will pitch. Each batter will have **4 pitches** to hit. The Batter either hits the ball in play or a batting tee will be brought out. The youth position player / pitcher remains on the field as a defensive player. “Hit Batsman” rule is NOT in effect. **NO WALKS or STRIKEOUTS**.
- 5.4.10 Base Running: A base runner may not advance beyond the base she is safely at or in the process of advancing to, once the ball is **in the infield**. Once the ball is in the infield, runner stops advancing, encourage players to continue to get the ball in the possession of an infielder to complete the play. All runners may advance one base on infield hits.
- 5.4.11 If the fielder makes an out the batter (or base runner) will return to the dugout.
- 5.4.12 No Advancing on overthrows.
- 5.4.13 All players play the field. Regular infield positions and the remaining players in the outfield.

5.5 Little Sluggers: 6-7 yrs.

5.5.1 Division Overview:

The sole purpose of the Little Sluggers division of WAA softball is to teach basic softball fundamentals and techniques. This is a pure instructional division.

5.5.2 Practice and Games:

All practice/games will be on Saturday's from 9-11:00 AM at Ridge Park. The format will be 45-60 minutes for practicing fundamentals and 45-60 minutes for game play. Each team will be assigned a field with another team and those teams will play one another during game playtime.

5.5.3 TEE/Pitching:

During the first half of the season it is recommended to solely use the batting tee for practice and play. During the second half of the season introduce coach pitching for both practices and play. During coach pitching play, each batter will have **4 pitches** to hit. If at that time the batter has not hit the pitch, the batter must then use the tee. **NO WALKS or STRIKEOUTS**.

5.5.4 Game Play:

All players on the roster will bat during an inning. Once the batting order is complete the teams switch offence/defense. There will be no scoring or outs recorded. If a player is out by coach's assessment, that player may remain on base at the discretion of the coach of the batting team. All players will play in the field during game play. Each team has 7-8 girls so this should not be an issue. Please alternate positions every inning. It is recommended that when the batter hits the ball, that all base runners only precede one

base. There is no leading, sliding, or stealing. While batting there will be no on deck batter or practice swings.

6 Post Season

6.1 League Tournament

The League will hold an end of season tournament for the **Senior and Major Leagues**. All teams are in the tournament regardless of regular season record. Teams will be seeded based on their regular season record. The higher seeded team shall be the home team. The Tournament dates will be posted on the website prior to the first game of the season.

**** TEAMS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TOURNAMENT UNTIL THE LEAGUE RECEIVES THEIR PITCHER /CATCHER EVALUATIONS. ****

6.2 All Star Selection Process

- 6.2.1 **Coaches:** Coaches interested in coaching an All Star Team may submit an application to the League for consideration. An application will be provided.
- 6.2.2 **Players:** Players are selected by team vote. Each player will vote for her top three choices. Head coach and assistant coach will also vote. League will try to have equal participation from all teams.

AUTHOR	DATE	CHANGE SUMMARY
T. Suhr	04/07/2006	Added Mini Minor league. Combined Junior and Senior league. Changed ages for Minor and Major leagues. Format changes. Removed " Excluding Senior league. " from G.) <u>Participation</u> . Added revision page.
Rules Committee	01/18/2008	Change to ASA rule book Forfeited game can still be played. Standings will not count. Mini Minor will play full innings. Added references to WAA website Major league uses Webster youth umpires Mandatory sliding changed to attempt to slide. Avoid collision. Minor: coaches encouraged to be in the field. Changed Mini Minor format League tournament: home team the higher seed. Major league to use draft system. Player ratings on website and mandatory for Minor, Major, and Seniors. Remove J1 No infield or outfield balls allowed between innings C: change president to commissioner. Little Sluggers: Removed Coaches Binder section.
John Palmer	02/12/2008	Helmet with chinstraps (all) and face shield (major&senior). Used ASA rules for "Hit Batsman", "Dropped Third Strike" and "Look Back"
Tom Suhr	12/10/2008	Little Slugger runners may remain on base even if put out. R) No returning players for Major league.

Tom Suhr	07/07/2009	Added Minors to I) Helmets.
Scott Woodruff	05/12/2010	Updated board approved rule changes for the Minors Division. Also re-formatted document.