



2012

Adapted Softball Rules

INTRODUCTION

The Adapted Softball Rules have been designed to act as a supplement to the Softball Rule Book published by the National Federation of State High School Associations. Language and recommendations that do not carry over to the nature of the game of Adapted Softball should be ignored.

These rules have been adapted as official by the Minnesota State High School League and recommended for use by organizations serving people with physical disabilities. Their use will standardize adapted softball competition within the State of Minnesota and throughout the nation.

If a specific rule is not referenced or cited in this supplement for omission or change, it should be followed as stated in the National Federation Rule Book.

Rule 1: Players - Field - Equipment

Section 1: Positions and Equipment of Players

Art. 1: Team -

Captains must field all their players. That is, a team cannot have players on the bench and not use them and play with less than ten. One player must be designated as captain. He/she and the coach represent the team in communication with the umpire.

Players using wheelchairs must be independent in management of their wheelchairs during play, manual or power chairs. No assistance will be allowed whether it is a pusher, a person having remote control, or any other physical assistance. (*Must be cleared by MSHSL*).

Art. 5: Omit

Art. 6: Omit

Art. 7: The catcher shall wear safety glasses.

Art. 8: Omit. Soft-soled athletic shoes are permitted.

Art. 9: Omit

Art. 11: Non-Traditional Playing Equipment -

Plastic hai-lai scoops will be allowed only for wheelchair players. Handle extensions will be allowed to permit wheelchair players to reach the balls on the floor.

Personal equipment such as wheelchairs, crutches, walkers, or prosthetic devices are allowed in order to improve players mobility.

Section 2: The Field - (Replaces Federation Rule)

The recommended playing field shall be a high school regulation basketball court or larger.

(See diagram). Note: Officials should inform Conference Board of any field felt to be unacceptable or questionable.

a. Infield dimensions:

Baselines: 25 feet (minimum of 30 feet)

Pitcher's Plate to Home: As appropriate as gym allows.

7' 6" from back tip of home plate - Batting Team's Pitcher

Section 3: Equipment - (Replaces Federation Rule)

Art. 1: First, Second, Third Base -

(*Replaces Federation Rule*)

a. The bases shall be rubber or synthetic material, 15 inches square, and no more than 3/4" thick, securely attached to the floor. Whenever possible, lines should be of colored tape that contrasts to colors of other lines on the floor.

A distinctively colored piece of tape 2' long will be placed on the floor 16' from home plate on the first base line for base runners advancing to first against fielders who use wheelchairs. If base runner does not get past this 16' designation before a wheelchair infielder makes contact with the ball, they are out. If wheelchair outfielder gets to ball before runners gets to this mark, runner is safe and ball is dead.

Art. 4: Ball -

A 12" circumference whiffle ball shall be used. (e.g. Cosom type "Safe-T-Play")

Art. 5: Bat -

The bat shall be a hollow plastic type bat, no more than 42" in length and 2 3/4" thick at its' thickest part.

Art. 6: Gloves/Mitt -

This equipment is optional but if used must conform to Federation Rule specifications.

Rule 2: Playing Terms and Definitions

Section 2: Ball, Batted, Blocked, Dead, Delayed Dead, Fly, Ground, Passed, Rotation

Art. 8: Passed ball – Omit

Section 9: Bunt, Attempted Bunt, Drag Bunt

Art. 1: Bunt - Intentional bunting is not allowed - batter is out. Whether the hit is an intentional bunt or not is left to the judgement of the umpire.

Section 10: Catch

Art. 1: Catch - Athletes using assistive devices (walker, crutches, cane) have the same fielding rules apply to them as an athlete in a wheelchair. Athletes using canes or crutches may use them as extensions of their body.

- a. A catch of a batted or thrown ball does not require secure position in the hand or glove of the fielder. A ball may be trapped against the body or wheelchair and be considered caught. A ball may also be touched by the player above the waist and be considered caught. Hands and arms are always considered above the waist. (Contact of an air ball is the same as if the ball was caught in the air; contact of a bounced ball is considered a catch of a bounced ball). Touching by a non-wheelchair player of a batted ball that hits the ground does not constitute catching and play should continue until the ball is secured and returned to the infield. (If no attempt is made to get a base runner out, the ball is dead at this point and all runners not directly involved in the play remain at their base).
- b. Any thrown or batted ball that makes contact with a fielder's wheelchair and/or person in the wheelchair is considered the same as a catch (contact of an air ball is the same as if the ball was caught in the air; contact of a bounced ball is considered a catch of a bounced ball.) If no attempt is made to get a base runner out, the ball is dead at this point and all runners not directly involved in the play remain at their base.
Clarification: Ambulatory outfielder cannot stop play by throwing ball to a wheelchair outfielder.
- c. The pitcher must get secure possession in his/her hand or glove of a live ball in flight and firmly hold it to make a catch and putout.

Section 13: Chopped hit ball – Omit

Section 25: Foul Ball, Foul Tip

Art. 2: A foul tip is a batted ball, which goes directly and speedily from the bat backwards and does not go higher than the batter's head. A batter is out when a foul tip is caught only when it occurs on the 3rd strike.

Section 30: Infield Fly Rule

There is no infield fly rule for adapted softball.

Section 31: Inning

A half-inning shall consist of a maximum of 5 runs scored by the batting team. Exceptions:

- a. In the 7th inning the team behind can score unlimited runs until a tie score is reached.
If the game goes into extra innings, the 5 run rule again applies.

Section 38: Out, Force Out, Tag Out, Put Out

Art. 4: Put Out

On normal tag plays, if defensive person is in a wheelchair, ball only has to hit wheelchair before runner arrives - tag is assumed. If defensive person is not in a wheelchair, normal tag rules apply. Wheelchair runners must have their body tagged, not wheelchair. On all force-outs - adapted rules apply to a catch. Therefore, with defensive player on base a thrown or batted ball has to be touched above the waist or make contact with the wheelchair or defensive player in wheelchair.

Clarification: For tag situations - if base runner comes within the 5' square extended base during or after ball is "caught" by wheelchair defender, tag is assumed. If the base runner does not run in to the 5' square, s/he could return to the last base.

Add:

- (a) Balls caught on the fly after hitting a wall will not be ruled as an out;
- (b) Balls caught on the fly after hitting the ceiling will be ruled as an out.

Section 40: Over-Running

Art. 1: Sliding is not permitted and overrunning a base follows the federation rule.

Penalty: Out

Section 52: Sliding - Omit

Penalty: Sliding is illegal and a runner who intentionally slides will be called out with no advancement of other runners on base.

Section 55: Stolen Base - Omit

Section 56: Strike, Strikeout, Strike Zone

Art. 3: (F.P.) - Omit

Section 64:

Art. 1: (PI Division) a substitute runner is the "last out". However, the "last out" player is not to be repeatedly used. The order should be: first last out; second last out; third last out etcetera. If a substitute runner is needed in the 1st inning and no outs are recorded, then you are able to use any rostered player not already on base. In these situations you must also rotate the substitute runner and not always use the same one.

Rule 3: Substituting - Coaching

Section 1: Substituting

Art. 3: Omit

Art. 5: Omit

Art. 6: Note Federation Rules.

Add: You may also choose to bat your entire roster (all players). This gives your freedom to substitute on defense.

Rule 4: Starting and Ending Game

Section 2: Ending Regulation Game

Art. 1: A Regulation Interscholastic Game -

Add: Each team must have 7 players in its line-up throughout the game.

Section 3: Forfeited Game

Art. 1: Omit

Rule 5: Dead Ball and Suspension of Play

Section 1: Dead Ball

Art. 1:

- d. (1) Omit
- f. (1) Touches a runner.
- l. Omit
- n. Omit

Art 2:

- a. Omit

Rule 6: Pitching

Sections 1-3: Omit (Fast Pitch)

Section 4: Pitching Regulations (Slow Pitch)

Art 1a: Omit

Art. 4: Omit

NOTE: All pitchers, using assistive devices or not, have pitcher fielding rules applied to them. (That is, the ball must be caught.)

Art. 6: Omit

Rule 7: Batting

Section 1: Position and Batting Order

Art 1a: Each Player -

- a. Omit
- b. The batter must bat in order to which his/her name appears on the score sheet.
- d. Situations:
 - 1.) Batters able to swing, but unable to hit pitched ball: (a) Use of a batting tee by a batter unable to hit a pitched ball will be allowed. Batters being pitched to by own team's pitcher count toward the number of batters hitting off a batting tee. That combination of batters must not exceed 5 for PI Division. Batters using a tee will be allowed 3 swings to hit the ball into play. Once the ball is put into play off the tee, the batter or substitute runner must reach first base before being put out by the defensive team. Batters needing the use of a tee must be designated prior to the start of the game. Once designated cannot change. Whether a batter hits the tee first or hits the tee at the same time or after hitting the ball is not significant in considering the ball foul or fair. If the ball goes into foul territory, it is considered a foul ball. If the ball goes into fair territory, it is considered a fair ball. If the batter hits only the tee, it is a strike.

- 2.) Batters able to hit a pitched ball follow the standard batting requirements as defined in Federation Rules.
 - 3.) For all batting situations -- the defensive team must be positioned in the following manner:
 - * the defensive pitcher must be in contact with both feet on the 25 foot pitching "rubber" for a batter hitting off a batting tee or being pitched to by his own pitcher. When pitching to a batter, the defensive pitcher must have one foot on the "rubber".
 - * 1st, 2nd and 3rd base defensive players must be within 6 feet of their respective bases. The short stop must be positioned behind the base path.
 - * outfielders must be positioned at least 6 feet behind the base paths.
 - * the catcher must be behind the batting tee/home plate.
- If violation of defensive position, players are first warned, subsequent violations, (same at bat) then batter is awarded first base.

Section 2: Strikes, Balls and Hits

Art. 2a: A pitched ball that hits the batter will be called a ball, providing the pitch is not in the strike zone.

Section 3: Batting Infractions

Art. 2: Omit

Section 4: A Batter is out when:

- C. A third strike foul tip must be caught per adapted rules (touched above the waist) for the batter to be out.
- m. For throwing the bat, first time the entire team is warned. Second and successive times, the batter is called out with no base-runners allowed to advance.

Rule 8: Batter-Runner and Runner

Section 1: The Batter Becomes a Batter-Runner

- Art. 1: Batter -
- b. Omit
 - f. A substitute runner can be used for a batter who uses an assistive device, or a wheelchair. That runner is the "last out". See also Rule 3, Section 1. *However, the "last out" player is not to be repeatedly used. The order should be: first last out; second last out; third last out, etcetera. If a substitute runner is needed in the 1st inning and no outs are recorded, then you are able to use any rostered player not already on base. In these situations you must also rotate the substitute runner and not always use the same one.*

Penalty: For not reporting prior to the start of the game, the batter is out and the substitute shall be ejected.

This substitute runner is not subject to other substitution rules.

- g. For a base runner who uses a wheelchair, or other assistive device, the distance between bases is shortened by 10 feet. After contact is made with a pitched ball or the ball off the tee, the batter, to be safe, must reach the extended first base area before a fielder is able to put out the batter-runner. Coaches may petition MAAA Eligibility Committee to have other players with severe mobility problems to be allowed use of shortened base patterns.

Section 9: Courtesy Runners

There is no provision for courtesy runners for catcher and/or pitcher. There are no courtesy or substitute runners in adapted softball except as stated in earlier sections.

Rule 9: Scoring - Record Keeping

Rule 10: Umpiring

Points of Emphasis

1. A ball that hits the ceiling and lands in foul territory is a FOUL BALL. If the ball is caught, it is an out. Balls hitting the wall and caught will NOT be ruled an out.
2. (PI) Rule #3 -4-a: When contact is made with the ball the substitute runner can advance only to first base. If the runner successfully reaches first base, the batter must replace the pinch runner at first base. Exception: The wheelchair batter will be awarded one additional base, as is the case with other runners, when a thrown ball is deemed "out of play". (The substitute runner for the wheelchair batter will not be allowed to go further than first base while the ball is still live and in play.)
3. Rule 8, Section 9 states: There are no provisions for courtesy or substitute runners in Adapted softball, except as stated in earlier sections (Rule 3).
4. One base on an overthrow that goes into a dead ball area.
5. Remember the difference in the foul ball for players hitting from a tee. If batter hits the tee it is foul no matter where the ball goes. If batter hits tee and the ball, play it where it goes – fair or foul.

6. Pitchers must have at least one foot on the rubber at the start of the pitching motion. Reminder that the pitcher must have both feet on the rubber when batter is hitting off the tee.
7. Read Rule # 6 regarding arc of ball – it is specific enough. It is legal to use a reverse spin on a pitched ball. Speed should be the determining factor ... it dictates the arc.
8. Coaches may call “time out”, but keep it to a minimum, keep the game going.
9. (PI) Rule 2-10-b states: If a ball hits a chair infielder before the runner passes the 16' line, the batter is out. The runners from 1st and 2nd move up and must be tagged to create a double play. If no play is made, the ball is dead and runners advance only to the base they were going to.
10. (PI) Rule 7-1-4: 1st, 2nd and 3rd base defensive players must be within 6 feet of their respective bases. The shortstop must be positioned behind the base path. Outfielders must be positioned at least 6 feet behind the base paths.

ADAPTED SOFTBALL FLOOR DIAGRAM

PI DIVISION

09-2003

