



ESTABLISHED JULY 1, 2014

2017 Official Softball Rule
Book & National By-Laws

Wherever "he" or "him" or their related pronouns may appear in this rule book either as words or as parts of words, they have been used for literary purposes and are meant in their generic sense (i.e. To include all participants, both male and female sexes).

Revised 1/28/2017

***Official Softball Rules Adopted, Published
and Distributed by***

**GulfCoast Sports Association
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It is the responsibility of coaches, managers, players and sponsors to know the GulfCoast Sports Association Rules and By-Laws. Ignorance of these Rules and By-Laws is not grounds for protest or appeal. Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood, and other approved materials in design of approved bats. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player assumes for themselves the risk of serious injury or possible death. By agreeing to be placed on a GulfCoast Sports Association roster, the participants understand these risks.

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GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

1. Purpose:

To provide organized and supervised competitive softball for member teams in a positive, nurturing environment that focuses on sportsmanship, character, committed work ethic and the value of team regardless of race, religion, sex, or age.

This includes

A. The promotion of amateur softball for all persons. B. To establish uniform softball rules and regulations.

C. To encourage the union of all eligible teams and organizations or groups with active membership in the GulfCoast Sports Association, into separate classifications.

D. To promote and conduct all types of Leagues, Tournaments, World or National Championships.

2. Rule Interpretations: Basic terms used in Softball such as batter, fielder, base runner, infield fly, etc. will be the same as in other major softball associations. If a question comes up and cannot be resolved by an umpire on the field, the Tournament or League Director will make a decision and will be required by GulfCoast Sports Association to inform the Executive Director and Vice President of their decision and a letter will be generated to inform teams of what the ruling will be in the future should that circumstance arise again. In no event will a team be awarded a favorable decision on a protest where that team has used trickery, deception or wrongful interpretation of a rule by an umpire, GulfCoast Sports Association official or tournament director. Under no circumstances will any GulfCoast Sports Association Director who has any interest whatsoever (such as being a team member, coach, sponsor, etc.) in any team involved in a protest or ruling have any authority or say in the decision.

3. Protests:

When a team manager or coach formally makes a protest, The umpire shall then notify the opposing manager and or coach, scorekeeper, other umpire and tournament director before the next legal pitch or before all players leave the playing field after the third out of an inning. After a pitch has been thrown, no protest is allowed

There are (3) types of protests allowed:

a. Player eligibility

b. Illegal equipment

c. Misinterpretation of a playing rule

Protests shall not be allowed or considered if they are based solely upon a decision involving judgment on the part of any umpire. Note:

Examples of a protest which will NOT be considered are:

a. Whether a batted ball was fair or foul.

b. Whether a baserunner was safe or out.

c. Whether a pitched ball was a ball or strike.

d. Whether a runner did or did not touch a base.

e. Whether a runner left his/her base too soon on a caught fly ball. f. Whether a fly ball was or was not legally caught.

g. Whether it was or was not an infield fly.

h. Whether there was or was not interference.

i. Whether the field is fit to continue or resume play. j. Whether there is sufficient light to continue play.

k. Any other matter involving only the accuracy of the umpire's judgment.

Protests shall be received and considered concerning matters only when there is a misinterpretation of a playing rule, Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule or failure to impose the correct penalty for a violation. Any team wishing to protest a game shall pay \$75.00. (Player Eligibility Protests are \$75.00 per player protested. Bat protests are \$200.00 per bat. Ball protests are \$75.00 per ball.) Teams who win the protest shall receive a fee refund.. The Coach or Manager of the protesting team shall notify the home plate umpire immediately of his/her intent to protest the game. Umpire shall then notify the opposing team and scorekeeper. The Umpire shall also notify the League or Tournament Director immediately.

In the event the situation cannot be taken care of by a League or Tournament Director a written protest should be filled out and sent in to the State Director and it will be forwarded to the National Director. These should be sent in no later than 3 days from time of incident and contain the following information. (1) Date, Place, and Time of game. (2) Names of Umpires, scorekeepers, League or Tournament Director (3) Rule and section of Official rules or local rules in question (4) List all information pertaining to protest (5) List your name and any contact information.

The decision made on a protested game must result in the protest found invalid and the game stands as played or allowed for misinterpretation of a playing rule, the game is replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made with the decision corrected. When protest for eligibility is allowed, the team shall forfeit the game played to the offended team. All decisions are final.

4. Player Suspension and Appeal Process- A State or Regional Director may issue a maximum suspension of one year from the date of incident. Suspension must be sent by registered mail to address on the official team roster. Suspension beyond one year must be ruled on by the President /CEO and Vice President. A player may appeal their suspension to a Region Vice President if issued by the State Director. If a suspension is issued by a Region Vice President, it can be appealed to the President /CEO and Vice President. Appeal must be in writing and received within fifteen (15) days of appeal. Appeal letter must be sent by registered mail to the GulfCoast Sports Association National Office. Appeal must be ruled on within seven (7) calendar days and appellant notified of decision by registered mail at address listed on official team roster. If at any time in the appeal process the appellant or Association fails to meet proper time notification deadlines the appeal process is ended and participant accepts last judgment rendered if at fault or decision will be rendered in favor of appellant if association fails to comply. State or Region Directors may issue an indefinite suspension for players or teams who fail to meet financial responsibilities for participation in all GulfCoast Sports Association sports programs.

5. Rosters: An official team roster will consist of no more than 25 players. GulfCoast Sports Association requires ALL rosters to be online at www.gulfcoastsportsassociation.com for ALL Postseason Championship play. Prior to the State Tournament teams are encouraged to have their rosters online. If a team does not have its complete (no player additions) roster online by the roster deadline, (midnight of the deadline day to enter the tournament), they will be Visitors for the duration of the tournament, provided the opposing team has their roster online by the roster deadline. A player who is under contract to play professional softball or any player playing professional softball is ineligible to participate as a player in the GulfCoast Sports Association program.

Adult: Players on an adult team must be 18 years of age or older. All players must sign roster. All players participating in **GulfCoast Sports Association Adult** tournament play shall have (2) two forms of I. D. available upon demand. Failure to produce proper identification will result in the offending team losing the game, being placed last in the standings and forfeiting all awards, sponsors travel money and tournament berths that would have been awarded at the tournament

Men's "Elite", "C" and "D" players can ONLY move down a MAXIMUM of ONE (1) class per year.
Individual Men's "Elite" players can only move down to Men's "C" teams.
Individual Men's "C" players can only move down to Men's "D" teams.
Individual Men's "D" players can only move down to Men's "Rec" teams.

A Men's "C" team can have a maximum of three (3) Men's "Elite" players,
A Men's "D" team can have a maximum of three (3) Men's "C" players,
A Men's "Rec" team can have a maximum of one (1) Men "D" player.

The classification of a player is determined by the highest classification the player played in his most recent two years of participation. If a player did not participate in the previous year, his/her classification will be determined by the last year he participated in GulfCoast Sports Association or any recognized major softball association.

Note: *When a player plays at a higher classification during the current year, and qualifies for Post-Season play, he/she then attains that higher classification for the balance of that playing year.*

Players may play up in classification, and may play down in classification, according to the limits above for higher class players on a roster. A player shall not compete in any sanctioned tournament of the association with more than one team during the same tournament. **Note:** A Tournament Director may declare a higher-class player ineligible immediately without having a team protest, if they are in violation of the above roster rules and limits. **EXAMPLE:** A men's ELITE player playing on a Men's D team in a tournament would be declared ineligible by the tournament director when he/she becomes aware of the violation. Any and all results to that point remain valid for that tournament.

A team roster will be frozen 72 hours (3 days) before the State Tournament, or when a team wins an N.I.T. A team with a frozen roster will be permitted to add three (3) players up to 72 hours prior to the start of the State Tournament, providing there are three spots left on that roster. Any number of players may be released, but only three may be added. Should any unusual circumstances occur, the State and/or Regional Director will make a final ruling.

Rosters are expected to be turned in before the start of your first tournament game. In the event of a protest and a completed roster is not available, your team automatically loses the protest. Rosters MUST be completed, signed and turned in at every Tournament up until they are frozen 72 hours before the State Tournament.

Teams may not add players to their roster that are frozen on another team's roster without a written release from that other team's Coach/Manager and signed by that Coach/Manager and the State Director. In the case of a youth team, the release should also be signed by a parent or legal guardian. Players who are on a frozen team's roster, and caught playing for another team, will be suspended for the remainder of the current season.

A team's "home state" shall be determined by:

- a. GulfCoast Sports Association League Registration.
- b. Where the majority of players reside with their primary residence.
- c. Where coach/manager resides with his/her primary residence.

Any and all adult teams may apply for reclassification after they have played in three (3) GulfCoast Sports Association events.

Any team caught turning in a roster with forged signatures will forfeit all games, fees, and be suspended by GulfCoast Sports Association for the remainder of that tournament.

Once a team has entered a GulfCoast Sports Association Tournament, as of the time the bracket has been posted, that team is considered in the tournament. If a team withdraws any time after the bracket has been posted, the team will owe the tournament entry fee and it must be paid before that team will be allowed to enter another GulfCoast Sports Association tournament. In the event of an uncontrollable circumstance the tournament director and State director will make a decision.

GulfCoast Sports Association teams are governed by the same eligibility and playing rules throughout the country, thus ensuring fair competition in championship play.

Adult Slow Pitch

Men's	Elite, C, D, Rec, 35 & Over, 40 & Over, 45 & Over, 50 & Over, 55 & Over, 60 & Over, 65 & Over, 70 & Over, 75 & Over
Women's	Gold, Silver, 40 & Over, 50 & Over
CoEd / Mixed	Elite, Upper & Lower, 40 & Over

Men's and Women's 40 & Over, and 45 & Over teams should refer to the Masters Slow Pitch Softball portion of this Rule Book on page 33, and 50 & Over, 55 & Over, 60 & Over, 65 & Over, 70 & Over, and 75 & Over teams should refer to the Seniors Softball Rules Section of this Rule Book on page 29.

The main criteria for classifying teams shall be the overall defensive, pitching, offensive strength and overall experience of the team. Teams will be classified by their State or Regional director. The State Director has the authority to re-classify any team during the current season.

7. Berths: Teams may qualify for State, Regional, or GulfCoast Sports Association Nationals (RING) Berths in each classification. In order to qualify for the State tournament, teams must either win a GulfCoast Sports Association sanctioned tournament, or play in at least (2) two GulfCoast Sports Association sanctioned tournaments before the State Tournament. To qualify for a Regional and GulfCoast Nationals (RING) tournament a team must participate in their respective State tournament.

Note: A team that wins a GulfCoast RING Qualifier tournament is awarded a DIRECT BERTH to the GulfCoast Nationals (RING) tournament and is not required to play in their GulfCoast Sports Association State Tournament.

In the event a team is entered into a Tournament and it's cancelled for any reason, that will count as "participating" in a tournament. Points will be awarded for GulfCoast Sports Association League play as well as GulfCoast Sports Association Tournament play.

8. Directors: All GulfCoast Sports Association Directors will be appointed by a Regional director or the President/CEO. Directors are required to sign a two year contract and at which time that two year contract expires, the CEO, President and Vice President will make a decision on renewing that contract at that time. However certain circumstances listed below could result in the termination of a GulfCoast Sports Association Director.

(1) Failure to furnish GulfCoast Sports Association Officers with Tournament Reports, Official's Sanction Reports, Team Sanction Reports, and fees in a timely manner. All reports and fees shall be received by state or regional directors no later than 10 days after completion of the event.

(2) Involvement of another tournament, league, or event not sanctioned by GulfCoast Sports Association.

(3) Any act or involvement that discredits GulfCoast Sports Association or discredits advancement, growth, reputation, or wellbeing of GulfCoast Sports Association or Softball in general.

DEFINITIONS

Altered Bat: A bat is considered altered when the physical structure of the legal bat has been changed. Examples of altering a bat are: Replacing the handle of a metal bat with a wooden or other type handle or inserting material inside the bat. A flare or cone grip is considered an altered bat. A sting stopper and Color bat Identifiers are acceptable. Should a player be caught using an altered bat, the ball is dead, batter is out, no runners may advance, and the batter is ejected from the game.

Appeal Play: An appeal must be requested by a manager, coach or player before the next legal or illegal pitch, or before all defensive players have left fair territory and on their way back to the dugout. On the last play of the game an appeal may be made before the umpires leave the field. The pitcher may then remain in contact with the rubber or step off the rubber while announcing which runner and base is being appealed. All the pitcher (or any infielder) needs to do, is announce to the home plate umpire which runner and which base is being appealed. And the home plate umpire shall make the call, if it is the home plate umpires call to make. If not, the home plate umpire shall point to the field umpire to make the call.

Ball Rotation: A pitcher shall have a choice of balls at the start of each half of the 1st inning, providing that both balls do not get put into play in the first half of the inning. If both balls get put into play in the 1st half of the inning, then the ball used last should be returned to the pitcher's circle. Each inning afterwards the pitcher may request use of the other ball, providing it's in the umpire's possession. Then that ball shall be used until which time, it is either batted or thrown out of play. In hit your own ball play, the offensive team may switch the ball in play with another legal ball at any time after time out has been called by the umpire.

Base Path: A direct line, along with three (3) feet on either side, between bases and runners at the time a defensive player is attempting (or about to attempt) to tag a runner.

Base Runner: A player on the team at bat, who has finished their turn at bat, and who has reached first base and has not been put out.

Batter's box: The area in which the batter shall take a stance getting ready to hit. The batter must have both feet inside the box prior to the pitch. The drawn lines are to be considered inside the box. The dimensions of the Batter's Box may be found in Section 2 of this Rule Book.

Batter-Runner: A player who has finished their turn at bat, but has not been put out or touched first base.

Batting order: Is the official line-up of the offensive players, listed in order of each one's turn at bat. Line-up cards should also include the players defensive position, and their jersey number. If used, the EH(s) must be listed. First initial and last name should be listed.

Blocked ball: A batted, pitched, or thrown ball that is touched, stopped, or handled by a person not engaged in the game, or which touches loose equipment or any object that is not part of the official equipment or official playing area.

Blood Rule: Applies to a player, coach, or umpire who is bleeding or has blood on his uniform and treatment is required.

Bunt: A bunt is a fair ball in which the batter does not take a full swing but holds the bat in such a manner in the path of the ball to tap the ball slowly to the infield. A bunt is not allowed in Slow-Pitch Softball. The ball is dead and the batter is called out. All baserunners must return to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch.

Catch: A catch is a legally caught ball, which 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 is prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body or clothing, the catch is not completed until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hand or glove. It is not a catch if a fielder, immediately after he/she contacts the ball, collides with another player or wall or falls to the ground and drops the ball as a result of the collision or 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

Catcher's Box: The area to which the Catcher is restricted while catching. The catcher must remain in the catcher's box until (Slow Pitch) the pitched ball is (1) Batted, (2) Touches the ground, plate, or batter, or (3) Reaches the Catcher's box.

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 on the field enters the playing field and delivers a message (by any means) to the pitcher or any defensive player. It is not a charged conference when the representative enters the field and removes the pitcher, or if the defensive team confers while the offensive team is in conference. B. Offensive Conference – The offensive team requests a suspension of play to allow the manager or team representative, on or off the field, to confer with the batter or baserunner. One offensive and one defensive conference will be allowed per inning.

Coach: A member of the team at bat who takes his/her place in the coach's box to direct his/her players in running the bases. Two coaches are allowed, one positioned at 1st base and one positioned at 3rd base. One coach can have in his/her possession, a scorebook and an indicator that shall be used for scorekeeping purposes only. A defensive coach or manager must remain in the dugout at their normal position. If the manager or coach does not comply after a warning from the umpire, he/she will be ejected from the game.

Dead Ball: The ball is not in play, and not considered in play again, until the pitcher has the ball in his/her possession and the umpire has called "Play Ball".

Delayed Dead Ball: An infraction, signaled by the umpire, in which the ball remains alive until all play has been completed and time has been called.

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 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- c. First falls in fair territory beyond 1st or 3rd base.
- d. Touches the person of any umpire or player while in or over fair territory.
- e. While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field, beyond the outfield fence.

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. It does not matter whether the ball first touches fair or foul territory, as long as it does not touch anything foreign to the natural ground in foul territory and complies with all other aspects of a fair ball. Home plate is in fair territory.*

Flagrant Player Obstruction: Is the act of a defensive fielder flagrantly, and with excessive force, impedes the runner or batter/runner. PENALTY: Immediate ejection of the defensive player.

Force Out: A force out is an out which can be made only when a baserunner loses the right to the base he/she is occupying because the batter becomes a batter-runner, and before the batter-runner or a succeeding baserunner has been put out.

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 on or over foul territory.
- c. Falls first on foul territory beyond 1st or 3rd base.
- d. While on or over foul ground, touches an umpire, player, or foreign object to the natural ground.
- e. Touches the batter or bat in the batter's hand while within the lines of the batter's box.

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.*

Foul Tip: A foul tip is a batted ball that 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 remains alive. The foul tip is treated as if it were a swing and miss. A batted ball that goes higher than the batter's head is a foul ball. It is not a foul tip. If legally caught, the batter is out.

NOTE: *Any foul tip is a strike, and the ball is in play.*

Illegal Bat: An illegal bat is one that does not meet GulfCoast Sports Association requirements, as defined in Rule 2, Section 1.

Illegal Pitch: An illegal pitch is a dead ball due to any infraction of the pitching rule.

Illegal Player: A Player who enters the line-up without the right to an offensive or defensive position. Examples of an Illegal player(s) are, but not limited to:

- a. Illegal use of the re-entry rule.
- b. Using a player to pitch who was removed from the pitching position.
- c. Violating divisional age requirements (Youth Only).
- d. Use of an unreported substitute.

NOTE: *The penalty for using an illegal player is the immediate ejection of the illegal/ineligible player.*

Illegally Batted Ball: Occurs when the batter hits the ball fair or foul and:

- At the time the bat makes contact with the ball, the entire foot is completely outside the lines of the batter's box and on the ground.
- At the time the bat makes contact with the ball, any part of the foot is touching home plate.
- An illegal, altered or non-approved bat is used. In this case the batter is ejected in addition to being called out.

Effect: The ball is dead. The batter is out, and all baserunners return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

Illegally Caught Ball: Occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with his/her cap, illegal glove or any part of his/her uniform, detached from its proper place.

Ineligible Player: A player who does not meet the roster requirements of the GulfCoast Sports Association. Examples of an ineligible player(s) are, but not limited to:

- Playing under an assumed name.
- Player not on the team roster.
- Player violating residency requirements.
- Player listed on two (2) or more official GulfCoast Sports Association sanctioned rosters (in the same program) without an official release form on file with the State Director.
- An ejected player.

NOTE: *The penalty for using an ineligible player is the immediate ejection of the illegal/ineligible player.*

Infield Fly: An infield fly is a fair ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt), which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when

1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases are occupied before two are out. Any fielder may catch an infield fly. **NOTE 1:** *All divisions play with an infield fly rule.* **NOTE 2:** *When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire(s) shall immediately declare, "infield fly, the batter is out" to aid the runners. If the ball is near the foul lines, the umpire(s) shall declare "infield fly, the 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 the ball is touched by a fielder. If the hit ball becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any other foul ball.*

Inning: An inning is that portion of a game in which the teams alternate between offense/defense. There are three outs for each team. A new inning begins when the third out of the bottom of an inning is declared.

Interference: Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member, who hinders, impedes or confuses a defensive player while attempting to execute a play. If judged so by the umpire, vocal interference may be called. Contact is not necessary for interference to be called.

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(s). 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 that holds the ball.

Legally Caught Ball: A legally caught ball occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball, provided it 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.

Non-Approved Bat: A non - approved bat is one that has not been placed on the GulfCoast Sports Association Approved Bat List or that has been removed from the Approved Bat List. Entering the batter's box with or using a Non-Approved bat carries an ejection penalty of both the batter and manager.

Obstruction: Obstruction is the act of a defensive team member who hinders, impedes or confuses a batter's attempt to make contact with a pitched ball, or who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running the bases, unless the fielder is in possession of the ball or is fielding a batted ball. The act may be intentional or unintentional, physical, or verbal. Contact is not necessary for obstruction to be called.

NOTE: *Catcher obstruction is called when the catcher obstructs the batter 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 the batter shall be allowed to re-set himself/herself.*

Overslide An overslide is the act of the offensive player sliding over and beyond a base he/she is attempting to reach. This is usually caused by his/her momentum making him/her lose contact with the base which causes him/her to be in jeopardy. The batter-runner may over slide first base without being in jeopardy if he immediately returns to that base.

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.

Pivot Foot: The pitcher's foot that must be in contact with the pitcher's plate or ground until the pitcher steps towards home plate.

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. The Home Plate umpire shall not allow a Quick Pitch.

Stealing: Base Stealing is not allowed in GulfCoast Sports Association play (Slow Pitch).

Strike Zone: The strike zone is that space directly above home plate that is not higher than the batter's highest shoulder, nor lower than the bottom of the batter's front knee, when the batter assumes a natural batting stance adjacent to the plate. Any part of the pitched ball that passes through this zone is a strike. A pitched ball striking the ground before crossing home plate is a dead ball.

Three Foot Line: The three-foot line is a line parallel to, and three feet from the base line, starting at a point halfway between home plate and first base. The batter-runner is declared out when he/she runs outside the three-foot line, and in the judgment of the umpire, interferes with the fielder attempting to field a batted ball or interfering with a thrown ball.

Tie Breaker/Extra Innings: After the completion of seven (7) innings or when the time limit has expired and the score is still tied, the tie-breaker procedure will begin. In the FIRST extra inning, regulation play continues. In the SECOND and subsequent extra innings, the last batter of the previous inning, whose turn at bat had been completed, assumes a position on second base. This would be done at the beginning of each half inning; until, at the conclusion of a full inning, a winner is determined.

Time: The term used by the umpire to order the suspension of play.

Turn at Bat: A player's turn at bat begins when he/she enters the batter's box and continues until he/she is putout or becomes a baserunner.

ADULT SLOW PITCH

RULE 1. THE PLAYING FIELD

Sec. 1 The **playing field** is the area within which the ball may be legally played and fielded. The playing field shall have a clear and unobstructed area within radius of the prescribed fence distances from home plate between the foul lines.

a. Adult Division Minimum Distance

Male 285 feet

Female 250 feet

Sec. 2 **Ground rules** or special rules establishing the limits of the playing field may be agreed upon by leagues or opposing teams whenever backstops, fences, stands, vehicles, spectators, or other obstructions are within the designated area.

Sec. 3 The **playing field layout** should include, in addition to marking for foul lines, the following:

a. The three-foot line is drawn parallel to and 3 feet from the base line, starting at a point halfway between home plate and 1st base.

b. The batter's on-deck circle is a 5-foot circle placed between home plate and 1st base and between home plate and 3rd base.

c. The batter's box, one on each side of home plate, shall measure 3 feet by 7 feet. The inside lines of the batter's box shall be 6 inches from home plate. The front line shall be 4 feet in front of the center of the plate. The lines are considered as being in the box.

d. The catcher's box shall be 10 feet in length from the rear outside corners of the batter's boxes and shall be 8 feet 5 inches wide.

e. The coach's box is behind a line 15 feet long drawn outside the diamond. The line is parallel to, and eight feet from, the foul lines extended from the bases toward home plate.

Sec. 4 The **official diamond** shall have Men and Women adult pitching distance of 50 feet from the rear tip of the plate to the front edge of the pitching rubber. along with a pitching "box" the width of the pitcher's plate up to six (6) feet behind the back edge of the pitcher's plate.

Sec. 5 The **distance from base to base** shall be 70 feet (Home Plate to 2nd Base: 99') with the option of. 65 feet, (Home Plate to 2nd Base: 91' 11"). **Note:** Regional and Global/World Championship base distance shall be 70 feet.

Sec. 6 If, during the **playing of any game**, the base distance or pitching distance is found to be in error; the error should be corrected immediately, and the game should be continued. This is not a point to be protested.

RULE 2. EQUIPMENT

Note: For every division contained in this Rule Book, ALL equipment must be 100% conforming, 100% of the time. The GulfCoast Sports Association reserves the right to approve or reject any softball related equipment for its intended use in the GulfCoast Sports Association program. Equipment does not merely need to meet industry standards, but must meet GulfCoast Sports Association Standards before approval is granted.

IF, The GulfCoast Sports Association believes in any way, shape, or form that a particular piece of equipment is dangerous and/or not acceptable for fair play, the GulfCoast Sports Association reserves the right to ban such equipment immediately. The team coach, manager and all players are responsible for verifying the team is legally and properly equipped in accordance with GulfCoast Sports Association requirements.

Sec. 1. Only **approved bats** may be used in GulfCoast Sports Association play. GulfCoast Sports Association will honor any bat approved by other major softball associations (ASA, NSA, USSSA and ISA; Bats with the 2013 ASA thumbprint marking will be legal for play in GulfCoast Sports Association. Bats need not have the 2013 USSSA thumbprint marking to be legal for GulfCoast Sports Association play), providing:

a. Bats shall not be more than 34 inches long or more than 38 ounces in weight.

b. Shall be marked "OFFICIAL SOFTBALL" by the manufacturer. Should a bat have "OFFICIAL SOFTBALL" not available because of wear and tear on the bat and still legal in all other aspects it will be considered legal. Only a BPF 1.20 or less is allowed. All bats must be "clearly" marked for identification. The burden of proof is on the player. "Worn Off" or partially visible logos are not considered legal markings and will be disallowed.

c. The bat shall not be tampered with in any way to either add or diminish the size of the bat from its original manufacturer specifications.

d. Weighted sleeves or fans will be allowed in the on-deck circle but must be removed from the field of play if not in use. The traditional batting donut is not permitted.

Note: Any GulfCoast Sports Association Director may at any time ask to inspect a bat that has been brought into the location of a GulfCoast Sports Association sanctioned event. The owner and / or user may either:

1. Allow the Director to inspect the bat and reach an initial conclusion on whether the bat might be altered or illegal. If after making an inspection, the Director, in his/her sole discretion, decides that the bat might be an altered or illegal bat.

2. Allow the Director to send the bat to the GulfCoast Sports Association office and/or the Manufacturer of the bat for a determination as to whether the bat is altered. ***Note** During the time of the examination, the GulfCoast Sports Association, may suspend the suspected offending player, pending the decision. If it is determined that the bat has been altered, GulfCoast Sports Association may suspend a first time offender for up to two years from GulfCoast Sports Association play For any second time offender, any suspension may be up to a lifetime suspension.

e. A legal bat shall not contain Timetal 15-3 Teledyne 15-333 Titanium alloy as a major property

Note: There will be a "designated area" for bats during the game. This designated area may be the space between 2 poles on the backstop fence, or could be a bucket or pail. All bats to be used during the game should be placed in this designated area prior to the beginning of the game, so the umpires can inspect them. No additional bats may be added during the game. Any bats carried from the designated area into the dugout area will not be allowed for the remainder of that game.

Sec. 2. The Official Softball will be an approved 12" optic yellow softball, .52 COR/300 LB (or less) Compression for Men's play, and an approved 11" optic yellow softball, .44 COR/400 LB (or less) compression OR .47 COR/400 LB (or less) Compression for Women's play. All balls must have the .COR and Compression rating stamped on the ball by the manufacturer and must be legible at all times.

Sec. 3. Gloves must be worn by all fielders. A glove or MITT may be used by any defensive player. A fielder's glove shall be made of leather or any other material and of the same size, weight and design requirements approved by other major softball associations.

a. The glove worn by a pitcher must be uniform in color and may not be white, yellow or grey. Gloves or mitts with white, yellow or grey circles on the outside, giving the appearance of a ball, may not be worn by any player, and will be considered illegal. Any glove/mitt that is entirely grey, white, or optic yellow in color are illegal.

Sec. 4. The bases other than the home plate shall be 15 inches square and not more than 3 inches high. They shall be made of canvas bags, plastic or other suitable materials filled with soft padding.

The **Double Base** is optional for first base.

- Any batted ball hitting or bounding over the white portion is a fair ball.
- Any batted ball hitting or bounding over the contrasting color portion is a foul ball.
- When a play is being made on the batter-runner, the Defense must use the white portion, and the batter runner must use the contrasting color portion of the base. **EFFECT:** 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 or contrasting color portion of the base, an appeal shall not be honored.
- On any force out attempt from the foul side of first base the defense and the batter-runner may use either the white or contrasting color portion of the base.
- On an errant throw pulling the defense off the white portion of the base into foul ground, the defense and the batter-runner may use either the white or contrasting color portion.
- Once the batter-runner reaches first base, they may start on either the white or contrasting color portion of the entire base.
- On balls hit to the outfield, with no play on the batter-runner advancing to first base, the batter-runner may touch the white or contrasting color portion. Should the batter-runner return, the runner and defense may use the white or contrasting color portion.
- When tagging up on a fly ball, the white or contrasting color portion of the base may be used. On an appeal for the runner leaving the base too soon, the defense may use the white or contrasting color portion of the base.
- On plays at First Base when the batter-runner touches only the white portion of the base and collides with a fielder about to catch a thrown ball while on the white portion of the base. **EFFECT:** Interference, the ball is dead, the batter-runner is out and all other runners must return to the last base occupied at the time of interference.

Sec. 5. Caps, visors, or headbands are optional, but if worn should be alike in color and with bill to the front.

Note: Hard plastic visors are not approved headgear.

Sec. 6. All players, coaches, and participants must wear shoes. Sandals are considered proper shoes for non-players. 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 in any division of play. 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.

PENALTY: If it is discovered that an offensive or defensive player is wearing metal cleats, the player will be ejected. If the player is an offensive player and has entered the batter's box or is on the bases, an out will be called and any base-runner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch. If the offending player is discovered after the player was called out, any base-runner(s) must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch. The defense will keep any out(s) earned on the last play prior to the discovery of the player wearing cleats. A defensive player wearing metal cleats will be ejected.

Sec. 7. The GulfCoast Sports Association **STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT NO JEWELRY BE WORN IN ANY GulfCoast Sports Association PLAY**. Exposed jewelry, which is judged by the umpire to be dangerous, must be removed and may not be worn during the game. Medical Alert bracelets and necklaces are not considered jewelry.

Sec. 8. Casts made of plaster or other hard substance in their final form may not be worn during a game. If the cast is covered in such a way to soften the cast it will be acceptable.

Sec. 9. The catcher while playing defense, may wear a mask.

Sec. 10. All players should wear uniforms that are alike in the same color with a minimum 8' inch number. Non duplicating numbers will be required at all Regional and GulfCoast/Nationals qualifying tournaments. Pants or shorts may be worn but should be alike in color.

- A pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thigh which may be distracting to the batter.
- Players may wear solid colored undergarments (these undergarments may not be the same color as the softball) under their uniform shirts or shorts. It is not mandatory that all players wear these undergarments, but if worn, they shall not be ragged, frayed, or slit on the exposed areas.
- Uniforms should have the same team name and/or logo.

NOTE: Shirts may have sleeves or no sleeves and still be considered matching. Players **CANNOT EXCHANGE** shirts with other players when they are substituted for during the game. All players must have their own shirts with separate distinguishable numbers.

EXAMPLE: #07 and #7 are distinguishable numbers and are NOT identical.

PENALTY: The penalty for sharing shirts will be an illegal substitution.

EXCEPTION: When a shirt is saturated with blood, team members can exchange shirts or wear identical numbers.

Sec. 11. Pitcher's while playing defense, may wear a mask, chest protector and shin guards if they so desire.

NOTE: The GulfCoast Sports Association recommends that all defensive players wear protective gear, if desired.

Sec. 12. No Equipment shall be left on the playing field, either in foul or fair territory.

GulfCoast Sports Association reserves the right to make changes or withdraw any approval or disapproval of any equipment at any time should in GulfCoast Sports association's determination change the game, affect the safety of participants or spectators, or creates a player's performance to be more a product of the equipment rather than their individual skill.

RULE 3. PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

NOTE: Any player participating in any GulfCoast Sports Association 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 incurring further injury.

Sec. 1 A team shall consist of nine (9), ten (10), eleven (11), or twelve (12) players if the optional extra players (EP) are used. Players of the team in the field may be stationed anywhere on fair territory, except the catcher, who must be in the catcher's box, and the pitcher, who must be in a legal pitching position at the start of each pitch. No part of the defensive player's foot (except catcher) may be on or outside the foul line, from the time when the pitcher steps on the rubber or until the pitch is released. Teams can play a maximum of ten (10) players on defense, and a minimum of nine (9) in the lineup. In the case where a team starts a game with nine (9) players, the vacant 10th spot in the batting order shall be declared an out for the entire game. However, should the 10th player arrive, the team may insert them into the lineup with no penalty. Inserting the 10th player into the lineup would eliminate the automatic out. If a team is playing with 10, 11, or 12 players and a player is removed from the game for any reason, including injury or ejection, and no substitute is available, the team may continue to play with the vacated spot(s) in the batting order being declared an out. The team may continue to play down to nine (9) players. The team may not drop below nine (9) players. When a team is left with a vacant spot in the lineup because of the removal of a player or having only nine (9) players, the opposing team, with two (2) outs, 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 previous 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. This only applies when there are two (2) outs.

Under no circumstances may a team play with less than nine (9) players.

A team must have the required number of players present in the team area to start or continue a game. Players listed in the starting line-up and not available at game time may be substituted for and re-entered later.

Sec.2. GulfCoast Sports Association has **divisions** for men, women, and a mixed (coed) division for both to compete in jointly. The men's division is specifically for men ages 18 and older, and the women's division is specifically designed for women ages 18 and older. With the exception of the mixed division, women may not compete in the men's program and men may not compete in the women's program of any division. The following classifications apply:

- a. The Men's program will consist of 12 divisions. "Elite", "C", "D", "Rec", "40 & over", "45 & over", "50 & over", "55 & over", "60 & over", "65 & over", "70 & over", and "75 & over".
- b. The Women's program will consist of 4 divisions. "Gold", "Silver", "40 & over", and "50 & over".
- c. The Mixed/Coed program will consist of 4 divisions. "Elite", "Upper", "Lower" and "40 & over".

Sec. 3. A player or substitute shall be officially in the game when his name has been entered on the Official Score Sheet, and in possession of the Official Scorer or who has been announced as a substitute by his manager. A substitute may take the place of a player whose name is on his team's batting order. The following regulations govern the substitution of players:

- a. The manager of the team making the substitution or the substitute should immediately notify the home plate umpire.
- b. If for any reason the umpire is not notified of the substitution and the change is not announced, the substitute will be considered in the game as follows:

1. If the batter, when he takes his place in the batter's box.
 2. If a fielder, when he takes the place of the fielder substituted for.
 3. If a runner, when he takes the base runner's place on the base he was holding.
 4. If a pitcher, when he occupies the pitcher's plate and delivers a practice pitch.
- In 1-4 above, in each case a pitch has to be thrown or a play has to have been made.

- c. Failure to notify the umpire of a substitution would create an illegal substitution with the penalty being IMMEDIATE ejection of the ILLEGAL player 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.

- d. Each pitcher whose name is entered on the original lineup and batting order, or who is announced as a substitute pitcher, or who takes a position on the Pitcher's Plate and delivers one practice pitch, must then pitch to the first batter facing him until the batter has completed that turn at bat, or the side has been retired, unless the pitcher sustains an injury or illness which in the judgment of the home plate umpire incapacitates the pitcher from pitching. A pitcher removed from the game, by rule or ejection, is not subject to this rule.
- e. Any other player may be substituted for or removed from the game whenever the ball is dead.
- f. If an ejected player is discovered participating in the game he was ejected from, the game is declared a forfeit.

Sec. 4. Re-entry Is permitted in all programs. Any player may withdraw and re-enter once, provided such player occupies the same batting position whenever he is in the lineup. Violation of the Re-Entry rule results in the use of an illegal player. Penalty shall be the immediate ejection of the illegal player when the violation is brought to the attention of the umpire by the offended team. Violation of the re-entry rule is handled as an appeal, which can be made any time during the game.

Sec. 5. The Extra Player rule can be used. A team may insert one (1) extra player or two (2) extra players into its lineup. The batting order must remain constant; however, any 10 of the 11 or 12 players can take a defensive position throughout the game. The EP may be substituted for at any time with the substitute becoming the new EP. The substitute must be a player who has not been in the game. If an EP is removed from the game for any reason, refer to **RULE 3. Sec. 1** above.

Sec. 6. There shall be not more than two **coaches** for the team at bat to give assistance and directions to the member of their own team. One coach shall be stationed in each coaching box at first and third bases. They may remain in that box. There shall not be more than one charged offensive conference between players and coaches or other players each inning.

Sec. 7. Managers, coaches, players, substitutes, or other team members or occupants of the bench, shall not, from any place including coaches' boxes:

- a. Incite, or try to incite by word, or sign, or demonstration either opponents and/or spectators.
 - b. Use language that in any manner refers to or reflects upon opposing players, the umpires, players, or spectators.
- Note: Use of profane or abusive language or taunting will not be tolerated. Note: Players violating a or b can be ejected from the game without warning.

- c. Argue balls and strikes calls.
- d. Be outside the vicinity of the designated dugout (bench) area if not a batter, base runner, on deck batter, or in the coaches' boxes, or one of the ten players on defense.
- e. Commit any act that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- f. Carelessly throw a bat or any other equipment.

Note: For a first offense, the violator may be warned that to repeat the offense will cause prompt ejection from the game. All flagrant offenses (including a first offense) shall cause the offender to be immediately removed from the game and playing area. An ejected player must leave the park immediately and take no further part in the game, remaining away from his team's bench or bullpen.

Sec. 8. When **team members** continue to harass the umpire from the bench, and he is unable to detect the offenders, the umpire shall first give warnings, and then if repeated, tell the manager to send all substitutes out of sight of the field, while giving the manager the privilege of sending for substitute players as he needs them to finish the game.

Sec.9. A **Courtesy Runner** may be used once per inning per team. The Courtesy Runner can be anyone on the Official Team Roster. The Courtesy runner is considered in the game when they assume their position on the base. Once in the game a Courtesy Runner may NOT be substituted for. If a player is on base as a courtesy runner when it is their turn to bat, they are removed from the base, an out is awarded to the defense and the courtesy runner bats in their normal spot in the batting order.

Sec.10. The use of an illegal player is handled as an appeal that can be made at any time while the player is in the game. A player does not violate the illegal player provision until he/she enters the game and one (1) pitch is thrown. Any action before one (1) 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:

- 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 on the play stand.
- 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.

Sec.11. When a player is bleeding or has an open wound, the bleeding must be stopped and the open wound covered with a bandage/dressing strong enough to withstand the rigors of competition. This treatment must be immediate and a suspension of play for **reasonable amount of time* will be awarded to the team. Should the treatment of this wound exceed a **reasonable amount of time*, the affected player must be substituted for. If no substitute is available and the team is using the EP, the team may play on with ten (10) players until the affected player can continue. When the affected player can continue, he/she may re-enter the line-up. Return to play will be determined by appropriate medical personnel or the home plate umpire. Any player whose uniform is saturated with blood, regardless of the source must follow the same guidelines as stated above for a person bleeding and must have that uniform changed, if determined necessary, before returning to the game.

Note: A **reasonable amount of time* will be determined by the home plate umpire and will be no less than 5 minutes. Soiled clothing must be changed, and the change of clothing need not be matching team clothing. This is not a point of protest.

RULE 4. THE GAME

Sec. 1. A **regulation game** shall consist of seven innings. A time limit may be used if all teams are notified prior to playing. A regulation game officially begins when the defensive team has taken the field and the umpire indicates (verbally or physically) to "play ball".

Sec. 2. A **pre-determined run rule** will award a win to the team that is ahead by:

- a. 15 runs after three innings
- b. 12 runs after four innings
- c. 10 runs after five innings

Sec. 3. The **choice of home team** or visitors shall be decided by a coin toss unless stated in the rules of the tournament under which the schedule of games is being played. GulfCoast Sports Association requires **ALL** rosters to be online at www.gulfcoastsportsassociation.com for ALL Postseason Championship play. Prior to the State Tournament teams are encouraged to have their rosters online. If a team does not have its complete (no player additions) roster online by the roster deadline, (midnight of the deadline day to enter the tournament), they will be Visitors for the duration of the tournament, provided the opposing team has their roster online by the roster deadline.

Sec. 4. The **umpires and director** shall make the decision as to the fitness of the field for playing. Once a game has started, the umpire shall be the sole judge as to the continuation of play because of weather conditions, darkness or other causes which place players or patrons in peril.

Sec. 5. **No alcoholic beverages** will be allowed in the dugouts or on the field during any GulfCoast Sports Association sanctioned event.

Sec. 6. The umpire(s) may **forfeit** a game in favor of a team not at fault in the following cases:

- a. If, after the game has started, one team refuses to continue to play, unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire.
- b. If, after the game has been suspended by the Umpire, one team fails to resume playing within two minutes after the umpire has called "Play Ball".
- c. If the order for the removal of a player from the game is not obeyed within two (2) minutes.
- d. If, because of the removal of a player by the umpire, or for any reason, there are less than the required number of players to continue the game outlined under the general playing rules of the GulfCoast Sports Association .
- e. If attacked physically by any team member or spectator from opposing team.

Sec. 7. 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. The score of a forfeited game shall be 7 to 0 in favor of the team not at fault.

Sec. 8. A run shall not 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 baserunner being forced out due to the batter becoming a baserunner.
- c. An appeal play at 1st base on the batter/runner for the 3rd out of the inning.
- d. A base-runner leaving the base before a pitched ball to home plate leaves the pitcher's hand.

Sec. 9. No succeeding runner shall score a run when a preceding runner has been declared the third out of an inning.

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

Sec. 11. In the event that a **game cannot be completed**, an official game can be called after 5 innings of play, or 4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.

Sec. 12. A manager and/or team representative, on or off the field, shall be allowed only one (1) charged conference with a batter or baserunner in any one inning. **Note::** *A strike will be called on the batter if more than one conference occurs.* There shall be only one (1) charged conference between the manager and/or team representative with any defensive player (other than the pitcher) in an inning.

Sec. 13. The following **Home run rules** shall apply:

- a. Men's ELITE – Six (6) Home Runs plus the One-Up Home Run Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.
- b. Men's C – Four (4) Home Runs plus the One-Up Home Run Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.
- c. Men's D – Two (2) Home Runs plus the One-Up Home Run Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.
- e. Men's Rec – Zero (0) Home Runs. The 1st Home Run will result in an OUT. Any subsequent Home Run will be declared an Inning Ending Out (3rd out of the inning) and the offensive and defensive teams will switch.
- f. Mixed "Upper" teams will be allowed Three (3) Home Runs, plus the One-Up Home Run Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.
- g. Mixed "Lower" teams will be allowed Zero (0) Home Runs. The 1st Home Run will result in an OUT. Any subsequent Home Run will be declared an Inning Ending Out (3rd out of the inning) and the offensive and defensive teams will switch.
- h. Women's "Gold" teams will be allowed Four (4) Home Runs, plus the One-Up Home Run Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance
- i. Women's "Silver" teams will be allowed Two (2) Home Runs. When a batter hits a fly ball over the fence in fair territory, it will be declared a dead ball out and no baserunners may advance.

Note: For the purpose of this rule, a home run will be defined as an unaided ball over the fence in fair territory. All home runs will be considered a home run even if there is an out recorded by appeal or any other reason. Any fair fly ball that is touched by a defensive player and goes over the fence in fair territory will be declared a four base award and shall not be included in the total of over the fence home runs.

Note: In divisions using the One-Up Home Run Rule, Once both teams have reached their respective home run limits, either team may hit an additional Home Run. However, neither team may ever go more than One (1) Home Run up on the other team. Any additional home runs above the one-up will be declared a dead ball out (No runners may advance). In the bottom of the 7th Inning or later, or after time has expired, the Home Team may only TIE the number of Home Runs the Visiting team has hit, they are not allowed to go One-Up, as this would result in an unfair advantage. The Visitors may ALWAYS go One-Up (in regulation play, after time has expired, or in extra innings), as the Home Team will have a chance to Tie the number of Home Runs in the bottom half of the Inning. If one team does not hit their allotted Home Run limit, the One-Up rule will not come into effect.

EXAMPLE: During Men's "C" play, Teams have hit their respective four (4) Home Runs by the bottom of the 4th inning. During the 5th inning, the visiting team is allowed to hit another home run to go One-Up. In the bottom of the 5th the Home Team may hit 2 Home Runs to go One-Up on the Visitors

Note: Any ball touched by a defensive player in fair territory, which then goes over the fence, shall not be included in the total of over the fence Home Runs. **EFFECT:** The ball is dead. The Batter-runner is awarded four (4) bases. All other baserunners are entitled to advance to home plate without liability to be put out. In a 4 base award situation, the Batter-Runner and all baserunners must touch all bases in order. Failure to do so results in an appeal play for a missed base by the defensive team.

- i. An additional Home Run may be added by the tournament director for fences less than the minimum required distances.

Sec. 14. The Tournament Director may declare that the Home Runs do not have to be run out for all divisions. *IF THIS RULE IS IMPLEMENTED, THE PLAYERS SHALL BE INSTRUCTED TO "HIT AND SIT". In all "HIT and SIT" play, the Batter-runner and all baserunners are not required to touch the succeeding base.* **EFFECT:** In all "HIT and SIT" play, each over the fence Home Run is a Dead Ball.

RULE 5 - PITCHING

TWO (2) OPTIONS ARE PRESENTED FOR PITCHING (RULE 5.1 AND RULE 5.2). The Organization hosting the League or Tournament should decide in advance which OPTION will be followed for their games, and make the teams aware of which pitching option will be used to avoid confusion.

RULE 5.1 – PITCHING: SLOW PITCH OPTION 1

The GulfCoast Sports Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT THE PITCHER (as well as all other players) use protective equipment at all times.

Sec. 1. A pitcher's box consisting of the area from the front of the pitcher's plate, 50 feet from home plate, and extending back 6 feet perpendicular to the pitcher's plate shall be used. This area should be marked off. The pitcher's box allows the pitcher to release the ball from 50 to 56 feet from home plate. One foot (pivot foot) must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate/box with the pitch released with an underhand motion. A step simultaneous with the release of the ball may be taken in any direction with the free (non-pivot) foot.

The catcher shall remain within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitched ball is batted, touches the ground, touches home plate, or reaches the catcher's box.

PENALTY: 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 action after this warning, they will be removed from the catcher's position for the remainder of the game.

Note: Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher must be at a full stop with the ball held in the glove or pitching hand in view of umpire. The pitcher may then release the ball from anywhere in the pitching box (Pivot Foot must remain stationary until the pitch is released).

Sec.2 The pitch starts when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the wind-up after the required stop. The pitcher must keep 1 foot in contact with the ground at all times. Any type of wind-up may be used. The ball shall be delivered toward home plate within 3 seconds from the start of the windup, from below the hip, from the pitching hand, at a slow speed, which is left entirely up to the judgment of the umpire. The umpire shall warn a pitcher who delivers a pitch with excessive speed. If the act is repeated, the pitcher will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

Penalty: Dead ball and a ball is called on the batter.

Sec. 3. When **starting the game** and at each half inning, or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than one minute may be used to deliver 3 warm-up pitches. Play is suspended during this time. No warm-up pitches shall be thrown with excessive speed.

Sec. 4. Once the **pitch is released**, the pitch must have a perceptible arch, having a minimum height of 4 feet, and a maximum of 10 feet from the ground, in the umpire's judgment.

Sec. 5. Any **pitchers action** that does not conform to the GulfCoast Sports Association pitching regulations will be illegal, resulting in a ball being awarded to the batter. If the batter swings at any illegal pitch other than one hitting the ground or the plate, the play shall stand on the result of the swing.

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 pitching 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.

Sec. 6. No pitch shall be declared when:

a. The pitcher shall not **attempt to return** the ball before the batter has taken position in the batter's box, or when the batter is off balance as a result of a prior pitch (Quick Pitch).

b. A pitch is thrown during suspension of play.

c. A runner is called out for leaving a base before the pitched ball hits the ground, hits home plate or crosses home plate.

d. A pitch is thrown before a runner has retouched a base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball was dead.

e. A member of the offensive team at bat requests time, employs any other word or phrase or commits any act while the ball is in play, for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal act.

Note: A warning shall be issued to the offending team. Any repeat act by any member of the team warned shall result in the offender being ejected from the game.

f. An umpire detects a foreign substance on ball.

The ball is dead and all subsequent action as a result of the pitch is canceled.

Sec. 7. 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.

Note: In the event this does occur, a warning will be given and if this action occurs again, the offensive or defensive player or coach shall be ejected.

Sec. 8. The pitcher shall at no 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.

Sec. 9. There shall be only one charged conference between the manager 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 for the remainder of the game.

Note: It is not a charged conference when the coach or team representative enters the field of play and removes the pitcher from the pitching position. In this instance, the pitcher may return to the pitching position

RULE 5.2 – PITCHING: TRADITIONAL SLOW PITCH (OPTION 2)

The GulfCoast Sports Association **HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT THE PITCHER** (as well as all other players) use protective equipment at all times.

Sect. 1. A pitcher's box consisting of the area from the front of the pitcher's plate, 50 feet from home plate, and extending back 6 feet perpendicular to the pitcher's plate shall be used. This area should be marked off. The pitcher's box allows the pitcher to release the ball from 50 to 56 feet from home plate. One foot (pivot foot) must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate/box with the pitch released with an underhand motion. A step simultaneous with the release of the ball may be taken in any direction with the free (non-pivot) foot. The catcher shall remain within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitched ball is batted, touches the ground, touches home plate, or reaches the catcher's box.

PENALTY: 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 action after this warning, they will be removed from the catcher's position for the remainder of the game.

Note: Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher must be at a full stop with the ball held in the glove or pitching hand in view of umpire. The pitcher may then release the ball from anywhere in the pitching box (Pivot Foot must remain stationary until the pitch is released).

Sec.2 The pitch starts when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the wind-up after the required stop. The pitcher must keep 1 foot (pivot foot) in contact with the ground at all times. The ball shall be delivered toward home plate below the hip, with the first forward motion past the hip, from the pitching hand, at a slow speed, which is left entirely up to the judgment of the umpire. The umpire shall warn a pitcher who delivers a pitch with excessive speed. If the act is repeated, the pitcher will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

Effect: Dead ball and a ball is called on the batter.

Sec. 3. When **starting the game** and at each half inning, or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than one minute may be used to deliver 3 warm-up pitches. Play is suspended during this time. No warm-up pitches shall be thrown with excessive speed.

Sec. 4. The ball must be released within 3 seconds of the start of the wind-up or when the umpire says "Play Ball."

Effect: the ball will be declared dead, and a ball is awarded to the batter.

Sec. 5 Once the **pitch is released**, the pitch must have a perceptible arch, having a minimum height of 6 feet, and a maximum of 10 feet from the ground, in the umpire's judgment.

Sec. 6. Any pitchers action that does not conform to the GulfCoast Sports Association pitching regulations will be illegal, resulting in a ball being awarded to the batter. If the batter swings at any illegal pitch other than one hitting the ground or the plate, the play shall stand on the result of the swing.

The pitcher may use any wind-up desired providing:

- He/She does not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter whether on or off the pitching rubber
- His/her wind-up is a continuous motion.
- He/she does not use a wind-up in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
- He/she delivers the ball on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- He/she does not pitch the ball behind his/her back or between his/her legs.
- The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll, or bounce the ball to the batter either on or off the pitching rubber.
- The pitcher shall not fake a pitch to the batter.

Any of the above actions by the pitcher, whether on or off the pitching plate/rubber, shall result in a Dead Ball, with a ball awarded to the batter, and a warning issued to the pitcher and the defensive coach that a similar act would be grounds from removal from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. These acts are to be considered illegal pitching actions, and are not to be considered illegal pitches.

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 pitching 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.

Sec. 7. No pitch shall be declared when:

a. The pitcher shall not **attempt to return** the ball before the batter has taken position in the batter's box, or when the batter is off balance as a result of a prior pitch.

a. A pitch is thrown during suspension of play.

b. A runner is called out for leaving a base before the pitched ball hits the ground, hits home plate or crosses home plate.

c. A pitch is thrown before a runner has retouched a base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball was dead.

d. A member of the offensive team at bat requests time, employs any other word or phrase or commits any act while the ball is in play, for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal act.

Note: A warning shall be issued to the offending team. Any repeat act by any member of the team warned shall result in the offender being ejected from the game.

e. An umpire detects a foreign substance on ball.

The ball is dead and all subsequent action as a result of the pitch is canceled.

Sec. 8. 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.

Note: In the event this does occur, a warning will be given and if this action occurs again, the offensive or defensive player or coach shall be ejected.

Sec. 9. The pitcher shall at no 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.

Sec. 10. There shall be only one charged conference between the manager 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 for the remainder of the game.

Note: It is not a charged conference when the coach or team representative enters the field of play and removes the pitcher from the pitching position. In this instance, the pitcher may return to the pitching position

RULE 6. BATTING

Sec. 1. The batting order (Official line-up cards) of each team must be listed and delivered to the Official Scorekeeper, by the Manager or team representative. Should an Official Scorekeeper not be assigned to the game, the Batting Order must be delivered to the home plate umpire, prior to the starting time of the game. The line-up shall contain the first and last name, position and uniform number of each player. **NOTE:** If a wrong number is on the line-up card, correct it and continue with no penalty. The first and last name and uniform number for all available substitutes should be listed in the designated place on the line-up card. Eligible roster members may be added to the available substitute list anytime during the game. After each team has submitted its own batting order, both lineups shall be made available to both teams. The lineups are considered official once the umpire puts the ball in play to begin the game. The batting order thus submitted must be followed throughout the game, unless a substitute replaces a player. When this occurs, the substitute must take the turn in the regular order at bat of the player he replaces.

Note: A player's correct name supersedes an error if an incorrect number has been entered on the score sheet.

Sec. 2. The batter shall take his/her position within the lines of the batter's box, within five (5) seconds after the umpire has called "play ball". He/she must have both feet within the lines of the box before the start of the pitch. He/she may touch the line, but no part of his/her feet may be outside of the lines prior to the pitch.

Effect: The ball is dead. The umpire will call a strike on the batter, also issuing a warning to the batter to take his/her position or risk being called out. If the batter refuses to take his/her position after the warning he/she will be called out. The warning will be given to a batter only one time per game. Any repeated violation during the game by that player, will result in an out being called. In taking his/her position in the batter's box; the batter automatically assumes a zero-zero (0-0) count. After 4 balls have been recorded, a walk is awarded to the batter. After 3 strikes have been recorded, the batter is out. **Note:** If a batter hits a "foul" ball after 2 strikes, the ball is dead and he/she is out.

Sec. 3. The batter shall not have his/her entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or touching home plate when the ball is hit.

Note: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance.

Sec. 4. 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. **Note:** The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance.

Sec. 5. The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an altered bat or non-approved bat. . The umpire must discover this illegal action before the next pitch, either by observation or because of an appeal from the defensive team.

Note: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and without warning, is ejected from the game, and baserunners may not advance

Sec. 6. A batter completes a time at bat when he/she has either been put out or has become a base runner. When a third out of an inning is made before the batter can complete his turn at bat, the same batter will be the first batter in the next inning and all previous called balls and strikes will be canceled.

Sec. 7.. Batting out of order is an appeal play by the defense.

a. If an incorrect batter is discovered before he/she completes a turn at bat, the correct batter may take his/her proper place, assuming any accumulated balls and strikes.

b. If the mistake is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed their turn at bat, and before a pitch has been made to a succeeding batter, the batter who should have batted is called out and any out(s) made prior to discovering the infraction, remain an out(s). Any advance or score made because of a batted ball by the improper batter's advance to 1st base on a hit, error, or base on balls shall be nullified. All base runners, if they have advanced, must return to the base occupied at the time the incorrect batter took a position in the batter's box. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the batter called out for failure to bat. This may even be carried over to the first batter of the next inning, if the appealed out was the third out.

c. If the mistake was not discovered until a pitch is made to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is then legal. All bases advanced or runs scored are counted, the next following batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter who just finished a time at bat. No one is called out for failure to bat and players missing their turn at bat have lost that turn and do not bat again until reached in the regular batter rotation.

Sec. 8. The batter is out if:

a. He bats illegally.

b. He hits the ball with an illegal or altered bat.

Note: If the Batter hits the ball with an altered bat, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and he is ejected from the game/tournament, and immediately reported to the State Director for consideration of disbarment proceedings.

c. He bunts or chops the ball deliberately downward (either fair or foul).

d. He has a third strike.

e. He hits a foul after two (2) strikes. The the ball is dead and no runners may advance.

f. He steps across the plate with the pitcher in pitching position.

g. He intentionally interferes with the catcher attempting a play.

h. Any member of his team (including the base coach) interferes with a fielder (either physically or vocally) attempting to make a play on a foul fly ball.

EFFECT: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and any baserunners must return to the base that they occupied at the time of the pitch.

i. If a fielder intentionally drops, or let's drop, a line drive or pop-up, which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort with 1st, or 1st and 3rd occupied with less than two (2) outs. **EFFECT:** The ball is dead, the batter is out and baserunners 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.

Note: A trapped ball that hits the ground is never ruled intentionally dropped.

j. He hits an infield fly, with runners on first and second, or on first, second and third bases with less than two out.

Note: The ball remains live and in play, and the runners are in jeopardy to be put out. Note: If a fly ball falls to the ground untouched outside the foul lines then bounces fair, before reaching first or third bases it is an infield fly. If a declared infield fly falls to the ground untouched and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball.

k. He hits a fair ball a second time with the bat in fair territory. **EFFECT:** The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners 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 umpires 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.

l. When a fly ball is legally caught.

m. Immediately when he/she hits an infield fly and the umpire has declared "Infield Fly".

n. 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.

o. When hit by his/her own batted ball, in fair territory, outside the batter's box.

Sec. 9. 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.

Sec. 10. A ball is called by the umpire:

- 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 catcher fails to return the ball directly to the pitcher.
- e. When the pitcher fails to pitch within five (5) seconds.
- f. For each excessive warm-up pitch.
- g. When the pitcher attempts a quick return pitch, the pitcher shall be given a warning.

Sec. 11. A fair ball is a legally batted ball which:

- a. Settles or is touched on fair ground between home and 1st or home and 3rd.
- b. Bounds past 1st or 3rd base on or over fair ground.
- c. Touches 1st, 2nd or 3rd base.
- d. While on or over fair ground, touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player.
- e. First falls on fair ground 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 foul ground at the time he/she touches the ball.
Note: *The ball is in play and baserunners are entitled to advance any number of bases with liability to be put out. The batter becomes a baserunner unless the infield fly rule applies.*
- f. While on or over fair ground, lands behind a fence or into a stand beyond the outfield fence, 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. 12. A foul ball is a legally batted ball which:

- a. Settles on foul ground between home and 1st base or between home and 3rd base.
- b. Bounds past 1st or 3rd base on or over foul ground.
- c. First touches on foul ground beyond 1st or 3rd base.
- d. While on or over foul ground, touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player, or it is blocked. **Note:** The ball is dead. A strike is called on the batter for each foul ball, including the third strike. Baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out.
Note: Baserunners may not advance on a third strike foul ball, including a legally caught foul ball; however, all runners may advance on any other legally caught foul ball.

Sec. 13. The on-deck batter is the offensive player whose name follows the name of the batter in the batting order.

- a. The on-deck batter shall take a position within the lines of either of the on-deck circles without interfering with the view of any manager or coach.
- b. The on-deck batter may loosen up with two (2) official softball bats, or any warm-up bat or product that has been approved by GSA (Global Sports Authority). No unapproved warm-up device, such as a donut, may be used.
- c. The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck circle when he/she becomes the batter, or to direct baserunners advancing from 3rd base to Home Plate.
- d. If 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.

RULE 7. BASE RUNNER

The GulfCoast Sports Association does NOT require base-runners to slide.

Sec. 1. The batter becomes a batter-base runner:

a. As soon as they hit the ball.

b. When four (4) balls have been called by the umpire. Base runners do not advance unless forced or successful in an attempt to steal.

Note: A batter may be awarded an intentional walk by the defensive team by merely notifying the umpire. A second intentional walk cannot be administered until the first walked batter reaches 1st base.

c. When the catcher 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 manager 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 first base safely and all other runners advance at least one base on the batted ball, catcher's obstruction is cancelled and no other options are given.

d. When a fair ball strikes the umpire or baserunner on fair ground.

1. If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner 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 baserunner before passing an infielder, the ball is dead and the batter is entitled to first base without liability of being put out. Runners not forced by the batter-runner must return.

Sec. 2. The baserunner must touch 1st, 2nd, and 3rd bases, and Home Plate in that order.

Note: The batter-runner and all baserunners only need advance one base, if forced.

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

Note: *The ball is in play and baserunners must return with liability to be put out.*

b. When a baserunner 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 baserunner may not run the bases in reverse order, either to confuse the fielders, or to make a travesty of the game.

Note: *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 baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.

Note: *The runner who first legally occupied the base is entitled to it. The other runner can be put out by being touched 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 third 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 a succeeding 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 three (3) balls or when a walk is issued, all runners must touch all bases in legal order. Baserunners 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. 3. Baserunners 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.

Note: Baserunners may not advance on a caught third strike foul ball.

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. 4. 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 attempts to continue to the next base.
- c. If, after dislodging the base, the batter-runner attempts to continue to the next base.

Sec. 5. Baserunners 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 remains alive.*

b. When a fielder obstructs a baserunner from making a base, unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball or has the ball ready for a tag.

Note: When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call "Obstruction" and give a delayed dead ball signal. Failure of the umpire to call Obstruction does not negate the 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. A baserunner obstructed in a rundown 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 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 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 give the delayed dead ball signal, and 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, and a four (4) base error will be scored on the play with the home run not counting against the teams home run total.

e. When the ball is in play and is overthrown (beyond the boundary lines) or is blocked.

Note : Awarded bases shall be determined *by* the position of the baserunners at the time of the infraction.

Note: For offensive equipment not in the designated area, or an offensive player causing a blocked ball, all baserunners must return to the last base touched when the ball became blocked. If the blocked ball prevented the defense from making an out, the runner being played on is out.

1. The ball is dead. In all cases where a thrown ball 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, including bats lying near benches, goes into the players benches, whether the ball

rebounds onto the playing field or not, or remains in the meshes of any wire screen, each and every baserunner shall be awarded two (2) bases.

2. When the first throw is made by an infielder, two (2) bases shall be awarded. The award shall be decided by the position of each runner at the time the pitch was made; however, if all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one (1) base when the infielder makes the wild throw, on the first play after a pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners, when the wild throw was made.

3. When a throw is made by an outfielder or is the result of any succeeding play or attempted play, the two (2) base award shall be governed by the position of each runner and the last base he/she has touched at the time the throw was made. If two runners are between the same base, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.

4. When a fielder loses possession of the ball such as on an attempted tag and the ball enters a dead ball area or becomes blocked, all runners are awarded one (1) base from the last base touched at the time the ball entered the dead ball area or became blocked. If a runner touches the next

base and returns to his/her original base, the original base he/she left is considered the "last base touched" for the purposes of an over throw award. f. When a ball bounds or rolls into a stand, over, under, or through a fence; bounds out of play unintentionally off a defensive player or other obstruction marking the boundaries of the playing field.

Note: *The ball is dead and all baserunners are awarded two (2) bases from the time of the pitch.*

g. When a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into a dead ball area, the ball becomes dead immediately. All baserunners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the fielder enters dead ball territory. If, in the judgement of the umpire, a fielder intentionally carries a live ball into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead and all baserunners are awarded two (2) bases from the last base touched at the time he/she entered the dead ball area.

Note: A fielder carrying a live ball into the dugout or team area to tag a player is considered to have intentionally carried it there. A dead ball line is considered in play.

Sec. 6 A baserunner must return to his/her base:

- a. When a foul ball is illegally caught.
- b. When the umpire declares an illegally batted ball.
- c. When a batter or baserunner is called out for interference, other baserunners 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.

Note: The ball is dead and baserunners must return to last base occupied prior to the pitch except when forced by the batter becoming a baserunner. Baserunners 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-baserunner 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 1st base with any part of his/her person, before the batter-baserunner 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.

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

- e. When he/she runs outside the three foot line, and in the judgement of the umpire, interferes with the fielder taking the throw at 1st base; however, he/she may run outside the three foot line 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 obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the baserunner closest to home plate shall be called out.
- 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.

Note: The ball is dead and the batter-runner is out. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.

Sec. 8. The baserunner is out:

- a. When in running to any base, he/she runs more than three 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 baseline 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.
- d. When the baserunner fails to return to touch the base he/she previously occupied when play is resumed after suspension of play.
- e. When a baserunner physically passes a preceding runner before that runner has been put out.
- f. When anyone, other than another baserunner, physically assists a baserunner while the ball is in play.
- g. When the baserunner 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 baserunner before he/she returns to his/her base.
- h. When the baserunner 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 baserunner is legally touched while off the base he/she missed.
- i. When the batter runner legally over runs 1st base attempts to run to 2nd base and is legally touched while off the base.
- j. 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.

Note: These are appeal plays, and the defensive team loses the privilege of putting the baserunner 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.

- k. When the baserunner 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 baserunner is put out, the immediate succeeding runner shall be called out also.
- l. When a baserunner is struck with a fair-batted ball in fair territory while off base and before it passes an infielder, excluding the pitcher.
- m. When a runner intentionally kicks a ball, which an infielder has missed.
- n. When with a baserunner on 3rd base, the batter interferes with a play being made at home plate with less than 2 outs.
- 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 baserunner 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 baserunner 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 baserunner 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.
Note: The ball is dead and the baserunner 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/her feet and deliberately, with great 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. The runner **MUST** avoid contact, slide or give themselves up.
Note: The offender is subject to ejection.
- u. When the baserunner 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 baserunner 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.
- x. When prior to a pitch being made to the next batter, it is discovered that the previous batter used an altered, illegal or a non-approved bat.
Note: The baserunner is declared out. If the bat was altered or non-approved bat, the player is ejected from the game.. Any out(s) made on the play shall remain an out(s). All other baserunner(s) must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the illegal action.

Sec. 9. Baserunner is not out:

- a. When a baserunner 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 baseline.
- b. When a baserunner 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 baserunner comes into contact with the one who, in the umpires judgment, was not entitled to field the ball.
- d. When a baserunner 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 baserunner 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 baserunner 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 baserunner 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 baserunner is not out and the ball is dead. All runners advance one (1) base if forced.
- l. When a baserunner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper place. The base is considered to have followed the runner.
- m. When a fielder makes a play on a batter or baserunner while using an illegal glove.
PENALTY: If an illegal glove or mitt is involved in a play, a delayed dead ball signal will be signaled and 3 bases awarded to the batter unless the batter gains 4 bases or the ball is deflected by the illegal glove or mitt and goes over the fence in fair territory. The coach in both cases has the option to take the result of the play. If illegal glove or mitt is spotted prior to a play, the umpire shall remove the glove or mitt from the game and resume play.
- n. When a fair-batted ball hits the baserunner, after it touched or touches any fielder, including the pitcher.

RULE 8. 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.
Note: *If the batter swings at an illegal pitch, the play stands.*
- c. When a ball is pitched illegally.
- 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 ball is struck at.
- f. When a foul ball is not caught.
- g. When a baserunner 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. In case of interference with the batter or fielder. k. When the batter bunts or chops a pitched ball. l. When the umpire calls time.
- m. When the umpire calls time and an appeal play follows, the ball remains dead throughout the appeal.
- n. When any part of the batters person is hit by his own batted ball while he is in the batter's box.
- o. When a runner runs the bases in reverse order. p. When a coach near third 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.
- q. When a baserunner fails to keep contact with his/her base until the pitched ball has reached home plate.
- r. When a play is being made on an obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he/she reaches first base.
- s. When a blocked ball is declared.
- t. When the batter enters the batters box with, or uses, an illegal bat or altered bat.
- u. 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 two outs, and with a runner on 1st, 1st and 2nd, 1st and 3rd or 1st, 2nd or 3rd bases.
- v. When a fielder carries a live ball into dead ball territory.
- w. When a foul ball is caught and the batter has 2 strikes.
- x. When a batter is hit with his/her own-batted ball in fair territory outside the batter's box.
- y. When a fair ball strikes an umpire or baserunner on fair ground 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 "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 baserunner on fair ground after passing or touching an infielder.
- e. When a fair ball strikes an umpire on foul ground.
- f. When the baserunners have reached the bases which they are entitled, when the fielder illegally fields a batted or thrown ball.
- g. When a baserunner 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 baserunner must return, in reverse order, while the ball is already in play.
- k. When a baserunner 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 base line 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 baserunner out for failure to return and touch the base when play is resumed, after a suspension of play.
- p. When a live ball strikes a groundskeeper, photographer, policeman etc. assigned to the game.
- q. When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.
- r. If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and in the judgement 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.
- s. When a thrown ball strikes an umpire.
- t. When a thrown ball strikes a coach.

u. 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.

v. When a foul ball is caught and the batter has less than two strikes.

w. When, in the judgment of the umpire, a coach touches or physically helps a runner.

Note: A delayed dead ball signal will be given and play shall continue. The touched or 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 9. UMPIRES

Sec.1. The umpires are the representatives of the league or organization for the particular game that 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).

- 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.
- Each umpire shall have the power to make decisions on violations committed anytime during the playing time or suspension of play until the game is over.
- No umpire has the authority to set aside or question decisions made by another umpire within the limits of their respective duties.
- An umpire may consult with his/her partner(s) 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 umpire(s).
- The plate and field umpires shall have equal authority to:
 - Call a runner out for leaving a base too soon.
 - Call "Time" for suspension of play.
 - Remove a player, manager, coach, or other team member from the game for violation of the rules.
 - Call the "Infield Fly" rule.

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 second base after reaching first base, or the batter-runner touching the wrong portion of the double base at first base, as provided in these rules.

Sec. 2. The Plate Umpire

- Shall take a position behind the catcher and have full responsibility for the proper conduct of the game.
- Shall call all balls and strikes.
- Shall be in agreement and cooperation with the Field Umpire(s) calls on plays, fair or foul balls, legally or illegally caught balls, On plays which require the Field Umpire to leave the infield, the Plate Umpire shall assume the duties that the Field Umpire is normally required to cover.
- 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.
- Shall render decisions on the bases when required by the instruction in the umpire's manual.
- Shall determine when a game is forfeited.

Sec. 3. The Field Umpire

- Shall take a position(s) on the playing field as outlined in the Umpire's Manual.
- Shall assist the plate umpire in every way to enforce the rules of the game.
- Can call an Infield Fly.

Sec. 4. Umpires cannot be changed during a game unless injury or illness incapacitates an umpire.

Sec. 5. 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 baserunner was out or safe, a pitched ball was a ball or strike, or any other play involving accuracy of judgment. Any argument is grounds for a player or coach to be ejected from the game. No decision of an umpire shall be reversed, except when he/she is convinced it is in violation of a rule. If the manager, captain, or either team does not see reversal 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. But under no circumstances shall any player or person, other than the manager or captain of either team, have any legal right to protest any decision and seek its reversal on a claim that it is in conflict with these rules. 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. An umpire may suspend play when, in his/her judgment, conditions justify such action.

Sec. 7. 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.

Sec. 8. The umpire shall suspend play whenever the batter or pitcher steps out of position for a legitimate reason.

Sec. 9. 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.

Sec. 10. When in the judgment of the umpire, all immediate play is apparently completed should he/she call "Time".

Sec. 11. 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.

Note: The penalty for first violations by a player is prompt removal of the offender from the game and grounds. For the first violation the manager or coach may be warned. For second offense the player is removed from the game. The offender shall go directly to the dressing room (if available) for the remainder of the game or leave the grounds. Failure to do so will warrant a forfeiture of the game.

Sec.12. The Official GulfCoast Sports Association Umpire's Uniform will consist of:

- The Official USA Umpire Shirt. In cold weather, a long sleeved white turtleneck, mock turtleneck, or t-shirt may be worn under the Umpire Shirt. An Official USA Umpire Jacket may also be worn.
- The Official GulfCoast Sports Association Umpire Cap.
- Navy Blue Trousers or Shorts (If shorts are worn, they must be the official USA Umpire shorts).
- Navy Blue or Black Ankle or Crew socks.
- Black Shoes (the manufacturer's Logo in white will be acceptable, but the shoe must be black except for this logo).
- Black Belt (Solid with no pattern).

Note: No Player during the course of any GulfCoast Sports Association sanctioned softball event may wear any part of the GulfCoast Sports Association official umpire's uniform.

SPECIALTY PROGRAMS

CHURCH SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL

NOTE: All Church GulfCoast Sports Association Championship Tournaments will be played on the same weekend.

Sec.1. A player or team is eligible to play Church Softball if he/she, or they, meet the active membership requirements of the Church, certified by the signature of an Official of the Church.

Sec.2. A team must compete in a Qualifying or State Tournament to qualify to play in the GulfCoast Sports Association Church Nationals Tournament.

Note: If there are no qualifying or State Tournaments in a state or region, invitations can be issued by the National Headquarters for a team to participate in the Nationals Championship. The roster should be frozen but the State Director when the team qualifies to play in the GulfCoast Sports Association Post Season format.

Classifications of Church Softball Teams – Comp. and Rec.

Sec.1. GulfCoast Sports Association Church Uniform Requirements

- COMP.– Matching Uniforms with 8" Numbers
- REC. – Matching Shirts with 8" Numbers

Sec.2. A Comp. Church team may hit Four (4) Over the Fence Home Runs plus the One-Up Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

Sec.3. A Rec.Church team may hit Two (2) Over the Fence Home Run plus the One-Up Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

Any Rules not specifically covered in this section will be found in Part I of the current edition of the Official GulfCoast Sports Association Rulebook.

WOMEN'S SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL

The Adult Women's Slow Pitch Softball Program will have two (2) divisions, Gold and Silver.

Rule 1 – The Playing Field

Sec.1. Minimum Fence Distance – 250 Feet

Sec.2. The Official Diamond shall have base lines as follows:
Women's Adult Slow Pitch Divisions – 70 Feet (65 Feet is optional).

Rule 2 – Equipment

Sec.1. The Women's Adult Slow Pitch Divisions will use the 11" Softball, .44 COR/375 LB Compression or .52COR/300 LB Compression with either the GSA or USA/ASA stamp and COR/Compression clearly printed and legible on the ball by the manufacturer.

Rule 3 – Players and Substitutes

Sec.1. Uniform Requirements for Adult Women's Slow Pitch Divisions

Gold Division – Matching Shirts with Numbers

Silver Division – Matching Shirts With Numbers

Sec.2. Player Eligibility

Gold Division – All players are eligible to compete.

Silver Division – No Gold players are eligible to compete.

Rule 4 – The Game

Sec.1. Women's "Gold" teams will be allowed Four (4) Home Runs, plus the One-Up Home Run Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

Sec.2. Women's "Silver" teams will be allowed Two (2) Home plus the One-Up Home Run Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

Any Rules not specifically covered in this section will be found in Part I of the current edition of the Official GulfCoast Sports Association Rulebook.

HISPANIC SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL

Hispanic Program Eligibility

Sec.1. Players must be of Hispanic heritage. Players should be able to produce proof of their Hispanic heritage, (such as a birth certificate showing their Mother's surname).

Sec.2. Hispanic rosters may have 3 Non-Hispanic players. Any or all of these may play at any time.

Classifications of Hispanic Softball Teams – Gold and Silver

Sec.1. GulfCoast Sports Association Hispanic Uniform Requirements

Gold – Matching Uniforms with 8" Numbers

Silver – Matching Shirts with 8" Numbers

Sec.2. A Gold Hispanic team may hit Four (4) Over the Fence Home Runs plus the One-Up Rule. Any excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

Sec.3. A Silver Hispanic team may hit Two (2) Over the Fence Home Run plus the One-Up Rule. Any excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

Any Rules not specifically covered in this section will be found in Part I of the current edition of the Official GulfCoast Sports Association Rulebook.

BLACK AMERICAN SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL

Black American Program Eligibility

Sec. 1. Black American rosters may have 3 Non-Black players. Any or all of these may play at any time.

Classifications of Black American Softball Teams – Gold and Silver

Sec.1. GulfCoast Sports Association Black American Uniform Requirements

Gold – Matching Uniforms with 8" Numbers

Silver – Matching Shirts with 8" Numbers

Sec.2. A Gold Black American team may hit Four (4) Over the Fence Home Runs plus the One-Up Rule. Any excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

Sec.3. A Silver Black American team may hit Two (2) Over the Fence Home Run plus the One-Up Rule. Any excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

Any Rules not specifically covered in this section will be found in Part I of the current edition of the Official GulfCoast Sports Association Rulebook.

TRADITIONAL MIXED/COED SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL (5 MEN, 5 WOMEN)

Based on a team's overall strength, a State Director or Regional Director may, at their discretion, change the classification of that GulfCoast Sports Association Mixed/Coed team.

Rule 2 – EQUIPMENT

The Men will use the Twelve (12) inch Softball (.52 COR/300 LB Compression or less) and the women will use the Eleven (11) Inch Softball (.44 or .47 COR/400 LB Compression Max). It is the Defensive team's responsibility to know the correct ball is in the game. Only the team at bat will be allowed to make an appeal on the wrong ball being pitched. If the wrong ball is pitched, the Offensive team has the option of 1) taking the result of the play, or 2) replaying the last pitch.

Rule 3 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

Sec.1. A team shall consist of 5 Male and 5 Female Players, or 6 Male and 6 Female Players if the EP is used. Males and Females must alternate in the batting order. Either a Male or Female may bat first. It is not permissible to use 11 players in Mixed/Coed Softball because of the alternate player rule for the batting order.

Sec.2. Defensively, 5 Males and 5 Females play in the field. If the EP's are used, a team must use two (2) Extra Players, One (1) Male and One (1) Female. These players may play defense at any time, but they must retain their original positions in the batting order. The batting order must remain the same unless a substitution is used in the offensive lineup. There is no minimum number of Males or Females that must play in either the Battery, Infield or Outfield. However, NO Rovers are allowed. There must be 4 Outfielders (Outfielders may not be on the infield surface) and 4 Infielders, not counting the pitcher and catcher. This would result in a Delayed Dead Ball situation, with the manager/coach of the offended team having the option of 1) taking the result of the play, or 2) having the batter bat over.

Note: When a team is using the extra player(s) (EP), and in the event a player or players are removed for any reason during the course of game and no substitutes are available, the player removed shall be scored as an out when his/her turn comes up in the batting order. In the event this occurs, the player immediately following the removed player is simply bypassed as a batter, but may still remain in the game as a defensive player.

Sec.3. A team may start the game with 5 Females and 4 Males, with an out being taken in the vacant Male spot in the batting order. If the 10th player arrives, he may be inserted in the line-up at any time, thereby taking away the "automatic" out. A team may always play with more Females than Males. This could result in 2 or more Females batting back to back, with no penalty. Under no circumstances will a team be allowed to play with more Males than Females playing defense, or to have 2 Males bat back to back, without taking an "Out" for the vacant female spot.

Sec.4. Classifications and Player Eligibility

Mixed/Coed ELITE – A maximum of 2 Men's ELITE and 2 Women's GOLD players are allowed to be on the team roster.

Mixed/Coed UPPER – A maximum of 1 Men's ELITE and 1 Women's GOLD players are allowed to be on the team roster.

Mixed/Coed LOWER – A maximum of 1 Men's D and 1 Women's GOLD players are allowed to be on the team roster.

Rule 4 – THE GAME

Sec.1. Home Runs

a. **Mixed "Elite"** teams will be allowed Six (6) Home Runs, plus the One-Up Home Run Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

b. **Mixed "Upper"** teams will be allowed Three (3) Home Runs, plus the One-Up Home Run Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

c. **Mixed "Lower"** teams will be allowed Zero (0) Home Runs with Inning Ending Out. The first Home Run will be declared a Dead Ball Out, and any subsequent Home Runs will be declared an Inning Ending Out (3rd Out of the Inning) and the offensive and defensive teams will switch.

Sec.2. Courtesy Runners – A Courtesy Runner of the same gender may be used once per inning for a total of two (2) Courtesy Runners per Inning, One (1) Male and One (1) Female. The courtesy runner may be any eligible player on the team roster of the same gender. The Courtesy Runner MAY NOT, under any circumstances be substituted for. Should a courtesy runner be on base when it is their turn to bat, they are removed from the base, an out is awarded to the defense, and the courtesy runner bats in their normal spot.

Sec.3. If the Male Batter is walked, they are awarded two (2) bases. The succeeding Female Batter ALWAYS has the option to 1) Bat in their normal spot, or 2) Walk (awarded 1 base).

MODIFIED MIXED/COED SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL (6 MEN, 4 WOMEN)

Based on a team's overall strength, a State Director or Regional Director may, at their discretion, change the classification of that GulfCoast Sports Association Mixed/Coed team.

Rule 2 – EQUIPMENT

The Men will use the Twelve (12) inch Softball (.52 COR/300 LB Compression or less) and the women will use the Eleven (11) Inch Softball (.44 or .47 COR/400 LB Compression Max). It is the Defensive team's responsibility to know the correct ball is in the game. Only the team at bat will be allowed to make an appeal on the wrong ball being pitched. If the wrong ball is pitched, the Offensive team has the option of 1) taking the result of the play, or 2) replaying the last pitch.

Rule 3 – PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

Sec.1. A team shall consist of 6 Male and 4 Female Players. No EP's are allowed in the 6/4 CoEd format. If at team has a 5th female player they should play using the 5/5 format, or use the 5th Female as a substitute. Males and Females must alternate in the batting order. This means that the Female players will bat more in a game than the Male Players. The female players should bat in the same order throughout the game as should the male players. Players should remember which player of their same gender they bat after, as the player of the opposite gender will change each time through the batting order. Either a Male or Female may bat first.

Example: Team A has the following Male Players, M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M6. Their female players are F1, F2, F3, F4 The batting order the first two rounds would be M1, F1, M2, F2, M3, F3, M4, F4, M5, F5, M6, F6, M1, F1, M2, F2, M3, F3, M4, F4, M5, F5, M6, F6, and would continue in this manner throughout the game.

Sec.2. Defensively, 6 Males and 4 Females play in the field. There is no minimum number of Males or Females that must play in either the Battery, Infield or Outfield. However, NO Rovers are allowed. There must be 4 Outfielders (Outfielders may not be on the infield surface) and 4 Infielders, not counting the pitcher and catcher. This would result in a Delayed Dead Ball situation, with the manager/coach of the offended team having the option of 1) taking the result of the play, or 2) having the batter bat over.

Note: In the event a player or players are removed for any reason during the course of game and no substitutes are available, the player removed shall be scored as an out when his/her turn comes up in the batting order. Teams will not be allowed to continue the game with less than 9 players, and will forfeit the game should this happen.

Sec.3. A team may start the game with 4 Females and 5 Males, with an out being taken in the vacant Male spot in the batting order. If the 10th player arrives, he may be inserted in the line-up at any time, thereby taking away the "automatic" out. A team may always play with more Females than Males. This could result in 2 or more Females batting back to back, with no penalty. Under no circumstances will a team be allowed to have 2 Males bat back to back, without an automatic out being recorded for the female spot.

Sec.4. Classifications and Player Eligibility

Mixed/Coed ELITE – A maximum of 2 Men's ELITE and 2 Women's GOLD players are allowed to be on the team roster.

Mixed/Coed UPPER – A maximum of 1 Men's ELITE and 1 Women's GOLD players are allowed to be on the team roster.

Mixed/Coed LOWER – A maximum of 1 Men's D and 1 Women's GOLD players are allowed to be on the team roster.

Rule 4 – THE GAME

Sec.1. Home Runs

b. **Mixed "Elite"** teams will be allowed Six (6) Home Runs, plus the One-Up Home Run Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

b. **Mixed "Upper"** teams will be allowed Three (3) Home Runs, plus the One-Up Home Run Rule. Excess Home Runs will be declared a dead ball out and no runners may advance.

c. **Mixed "Lower"** teams will be allowed Zero (0) Home Runs with Inning Ending Out. The first Home Run will be declared a Dead Ball Out, and any subsequent Home Runs will be declared an Inning Ending Out (3rd Out of the Inning) and the offensive and defensive teams will switch.

Sec.2. Courtesy Runners – A Courtesy Runner of the same gender may be used once per inning for a total of two (2) Courtesy Runners per Inning, One (1) Male and One (1) Female. The courtesy runner may be any eligible player on the team roster of the same gender. The Courtesy Runner MAY NOT, under any circumstances be substituted for. Should a courtesy runner be on base when it is their turn to bat, they are removed from the base, an out is awarded to the defense, and the courtesy runner bats in their normal spot.

Sec.3. If the Male Batter is walked, they are awarded two (2) bases. The succeeding Female Batter ALWAYS has the option to 1) Bat in their normal spot, or 2) Walk (awarded 1 base).

SENIORS SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL

Seniors Slow Pitch Softball shall begin at the age of 50 and will advance each 5 years thereafter to include the following divisions of play: 50 & Over, 55 & Over, 60 & Over, 65 & Over, 70 & Over, and 75 & Over. Eligibility for all senior players pertaining to age shall be the calendar year.

Exception: Teams participating in the 70 & Over and 75 & Over divisions may have two (2) players on their roster that are one (1) year younger than the age division indicates. Example: A 70 & Over team may have two (2) players that will be 69 years of age in the current calendar year.

Rule 1 – The Playing Field

Sec. 1. The Official Diamond will have base distances of 70 feet.

Note: The GulfCoast Sports Association Senior Division will play with a double base at 1st base.

- If the first play is at 1st base, either from the infield or outfield a runner will be called out for touching the inside (white) base.
- If the play is elsewhere the runner may touch either base in a continuation toward 2nd base.
- A runner running toward 1st base may cross over to the inside (white) base to avoid a collision, in the case of a wild throw.
- The batter-runner or a baserunner may use the inside (white) base if they are attempting to return to 1st base.
- If, in the judgment of the umpire, the batter-runner touches the inside (white) bag solely in an attempt to avoid collision, the play will be called as though the batter-runner actually touched the outside (colored) base.

Sec. 2. The Official Diamond will have a Pitching Box fifty-three (53) feet from the back corner of home plate and extending back three feet perpendicular to the pitcher's plate toward 2nd base.

NOTE: On fields where the pitching rubber is at 50 feet, the pitchers box will extend back 6 feet perpendicular to the pitcher's plate toward 2nd base.

Sec. 3. A Strike Mat will be used in all Senior Play, and will be 18" wide and 36" long to include Home Plate. The Strike Mat includes Home Plate. A Pitch which reaches a minimum height of 6 feet from the ground and a maximum height of 10 feet from the ground, is delivered underhand at a moderate speed, and hits this mat will be called a Strike. If any part of the preceding statement is not true, the pitch will be called a Ball.

Sec. 4. A scoring plate will be used in the Senior Division. It shall be located with its right corner eight (8) feet from the back point of Home Plate. The scoring plate shall be located on an imaginary extension of the 1st base foul line. The scoring plate shall be anchored to the ground to prevent slippage and changes of position of the plate during the game. The Offensive team must always touch the scoring plate when scoring a run.

Option: Facilities that do not have an additional scoring plate may use a scoring line that is an extension of the 1st base foul line. This scoring line should begin at the back line of the right handed batter's box and extend to the backstop. If a baserunner touches home plate or runs through the right handed batter's box, the baserunner is out and no run shall score.

Note: For a run to score, the baserunner must touch the scoring plate, or touch the ground on or past the scoring line, before the catcher or other defensive player touches Home Plate while in possession of the ball. The Defensive player must have possession of the ball and always touches Home Plate to record the out. If the defensive players tags or attempts to tag the baserunner is automatically safe. This rule is designed to promote safety by removing collisions at Home Plate from Seniors Softball.

Sec. 5. A Commitment Line shall be marked across and perpendicular to the foul line **thirty (30)** feet from the point of home plate along the 3rd base line. This Commitment Line will be six (6) feet in length. After a baserunner's foot touches the ground on or past the commitment line, that runner is committed to advancing to the scoring plate only. They may not retreat or return to 3rd base. The only exception is that a baserunner may retreat across the commitment line to retag on a caught fly ball.

Effect: If a baserunner retreats across the commitment line, he/she will be declared out and the ball will remain alive.

Rule 2 – Equipment

Softball is a contact sport, played with Composite, Aluminum, Wood and other approved materials used in the design of approved bats and softballs. The game of softball can be a dangerous sport to participate in. In playing the game of softball, the player assumes for themselves the risk of serious injury or even death. By agreeing to be placed on a GulfCoast Sports Association roster, the participant understands these risks. To reduce the risk of injury, the GulfCoast Sports Association HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT EVERY PLAYER wear protective equipment.

Note: For every division contained in this Rule Book, ALL equipment must be 100% conforming, 100% of the time. GulfCoast Sports Association reserves the right to approve or reject any softball related equipment for its intended use in the GulfCoast Sports Association program. Equipment does not merely need to meet industry standards, but must meet GulfCoast Sports Association Standards before approval is granted.

IF, GulfCoast Sports Association believes in any way, shape, or form that a particular piece of equipment is dangerous and/or not acceptable for fair play, GulfCoast Sports Association reserves the right to ban such equipment immediately.

Sec. 1. The Senior divisions (50 years old and older) may use the Senior Bats. The BPF may not exceed 1.21. Any Senior play whatsoever using the Senior Bats of 1.21 BPF MAY use the .44 COR/375 LB compression softball. There are to be NO exceptions to this. Seniors MAY NOT use the Senior Bats in any tournament or league that is NOT a senior event (ALL participants 50 & Over), or a Masters Event (40 and Over or 45 and Over).

Note: ANYONE caught using a Senior bat in anything other than Senior or Masters Competition will result in an automatic OUT and will be ejected from the game immediately.

Sec. 2. The official Senior softball shall be a smooth-seamed, raised seam, concealed-stitch, or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok or a mixture of cork and rubber, and/or machine wound, with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement. Or it may be made of other materials approved by the GulfCoast Sports Association. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide, or other materials approved by the GulfCoast Sports Association, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with red waxed cotton or red linen thread to form a red stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with the official GulfCoast Sports Association logo that contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball MAXIMUM C.O.R. is .44, and Maximum Compression for GulfCoast Sports Association softballs is 375 pounds with no tolerance.

Note: The men's division will use the twelve (12") softball and the women's division will use the eleven (11") softball.

Rule 3 – Players and Substitutions

Sec. 1. Senior players must have a valid picture identification card (i.e. Photo ID), in their possession at all sanctioned events. Senior players may participate with two (2) teams (in different age divisions) in a Qualifying and Post Season Tournament on the same weekend. Senior Players may play down in another age division but must maintain the same classification level. EXAMPLE: 60 & Over Major player could play in either a 55 & Over or a 50 & Over Major Division, but would not be permitted to play in a 55 & Over or 50 & Over AAA or AA Division.

Sec. 2. An official senior roster shall not exceed twenty five (25) players. Rosters will be based on state boundaries. A Senior team may have two (2) players who do not reside in the team's home state or a state whose borders touch the borders of the team's home state. All other players must meet these geographical restrictions. The team's home state is established by where the majority of players on the team's roster have their primary residence. The Senior Women's program has NO state boundary restrictions.

Sec. 3. GulfCoast Sports Association will use the following divisions of play in the Seniors Divisions (50 & Over to 75 & Over); Major, AAA and AA.

Rule 4 – The Game

Sec. 1. GulfCoast Sports Association Senior teams must participate in a GulfCoast Sports Association sanctioned tournament and State Championship to be eligible to advance to the GulfCoast National Championship. All teams and their rosters will be subject to the National Senior Softball Ratings.

Sec. 2. The GSA Senior softball program will use a three (3) to five (5) game guarantee tournament format.

- If a five (5) game format is used, the tournament format will consist of three (3) game pool play followed by a double elimination bracket.
- Teams must play in pool play to participate in bracket play. Failure to participate in the pool play (round robin) portion of the tournament will result in the team being eliminated from the tournament and a last place finish.

Sec. 3. In the GulfCoast Sports Association Senior Division, Sixty (60) minutes will be put on the clock to start the game. During the first six (6) innings, or while there is time on the clock, teams may only score five (5) runs per half inning. When time expires, or after six (6) full innings, the home plate umpire will notify teams that they will finish the current inning and play one (1) additional untimed, unlimited run inning. This inning is called the buffet inning. In Post Season play, no time limit will be played in the Semi-Final, Championship, and IF Necessary game. A regulation game will consist of seven (7) innings. A full seven (7) innings need not be played if the Home team (2nd team at bat) scores more runs in six (6) innings or before the 3rd out of the 7th inning than the Visitors scored in 7 at bats.

Sec. 5. Home Runs – The following Home Run Rules will be used for each division at each age group:

MAJOR – Eight (8) home runs plus the one up home run rule. Each untouched ball that goes over the fence in fair territory which exceeds the team's home run limit will be declared a dead ball out and no baserunners may advance.

AAA - Five (5) home runs plus the one up home run rule. Each untouched ball that goes over the fence in fair territory which exceeds the team's home run limit will be declared a dead ball out and no baserunners may advance.

AA - Three (3) home runs plus the one up home run rule. Each untouched ball that goes over the fence in fair territory which exceeds the team's home run limit will be declared a dead ball out and no baserunners may advance.

Sec. 6. – Sliding is permissible at 2nd base, 3rd base, and returning to 1st base only. No sliding at Home Plate or going to 1st base the first time.

Effect: The runner is declared out.

Sec. 7. – In the GulfCoast Sports Association Senior Division an unlimited number of Courtesy runners shall be allowed in all divisions. The same player cannot be used as a courtesy runner more than once per inning. Any courtesy runner discovered running more than once in the same inning, or when it is their turn to bat will be declared out. If a courtesy runner is on base when it is their turn to bat, an out will be recorded on that runner on base, and they will bat in their correct spot in the batting order. No courtesy runner may run for another courtesy runner. If a courtesy runner is substituted for illegally, it must be caught and appealed before the next pitch.

Sec. 8. The batter enters the batter's box with a 0 – 0 count. After four (4) balls, the batter is awarded 1st base (walk). After three (3) strikes, the batter is out. A foul ball on the 3rd strike is a Dead Ball Out, and no baserunners may advance, whether the foul ball is caught or not.

Rule 5 – Pitching

The GulfCoast Sports Association **HIGHLY RECOMMENDS THAT THE PITCHER (as well as all other players) use protective equipment at all times.**

Sec. 1. A pitching plate/rubber will be used with the front edge being located 53 feet from the back corner of home plate. There will be a box extending back three (3) feet towards 2nd base, the same width as the pitching plate/rubber. Preliminary to pitching, the pitcher must be at a full stop with the ball held in the pitching hand in view of the home plate umpire. One foot (the pivot foot) must remain in contact with the pitching plate/rubber or ground within the pitcher's box, with the pitch being released with an underhand motion. A step simultaneous with the release of the ball may be taken in any direction with the free (non-pivot) foot. The catcher shall remain within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitched ball is batted, touches the ground, touches home plate, or reaches the catcher's box.

PENALTY: 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 action after this warning, they will be removed from the catcher's position for the remainder of the game.

Sec.2 The pitch starts when the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the wind-up after the required stop. The pitcher must keep 1 foot (pivot foot) in contact with the ground at all times. The ball shall be delivered toward home plate below the hip, with the first forward motion past the hip, from the pitching hand, at a slow speed, which is left entirely up to the judgment of the umpire. The umpire shall warn a pitcher who delivers a pitch with excessive speed. If the act is repeated, the pitcher will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

Effect: Dead ball and a ball is called on the batter.

Sec. 3. When **starting the game** and at each half inning, or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than one minute may be used to deliver 3 warm-up pitches. Play is suspended during this time. No warm-up pitches shall be thrown with excessive speed.

Sec. 4. The ball must be released within 3 seconds of the start of the wind-up or when the umpire says "Play Ball."

Effect: the ball will be declared dead, and a ball is awarded to the batter.

Sec. 5 Once the **pitch is released**, the pitch must have a perceptible arch, having a minimum height of 6 feet, and a maximum of 10 feet from the ground, in the umpire's judgment.

Sec. 6. Any **pitchers action** that does not conform to the GulfCoast Sports Association pitching regulations will be illegal, resulting in a ball being awarded to the batter. If the batter swings at any illegal pitch other than one hitting the ground or the plate, the play shall stand on the result of the swing.

The pitcher may use any wind-up desired providing:

- He/She does not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter whether on or off the pitching rubber
- His/her wind-up is a continuous motion.
- He/she does not use a wind-up in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion.

- He/she delivers the ball on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- He/she does not pitch the ball behind his/her back or between his/her legs.
- The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll, or bounce the ball to the batter either on or off the pitching rubber.
- The pitcher shall not fake a pitch to the batter.

Any of the above actions by the pitcher, whether on or off the pitching plate/rubber, shall result in a Dead Ball, with a ball awarded to the batter, and a warning issued to the pitcher and the defensive coach that a similar act would be grounds from removal from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. These acts are to be considered illegal pitching actions, and are not to be considered illegal pitches.

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 pitching 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.

Sec. 7. The pitcher shall not **attempt to return** the ball before the batter has taken position in the batter's box, or when the batter is off balance as a result of a prior pitch. **Note:** The ball is dead and a ball is awarded to the batter.

Sec. 8. No pitch shall be declared when:

- a. A pitch is thrown during suspension of play.
- b. A runner is called out for leaving a base before the pitched ball hits the ground, hits home plate or crosses home plate.
- c. A pitch is thrown before a runner has retouched a base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball was dead.
- d. A member of the offensive team at bat requests time, employs any other word or phrase or commits any act while the ball is in play, for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal act.

Note: A warning shall be issued to the offending team. Any repeat act by any member of the team warned shall result in the offender being ejected from the game.

- e. An umpire detects a foreign substance on ball.
The ball is dead and all subsequent action as a result of the pitch is canceled.

Sec. 9. 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.

Note: In the event this does occur, a warning will be given and if this action occurs again, the offensive or defensive player or coach shall be ejected.

Sec. 10. The pitcher shall at no 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.

Sec. 11. There shall be only one charged conference between the manager 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 for the remainder of the game.

Note: It is not a charged conference when the coach or team representative enters the field of play and removes the pitcher from the pitching position. In this instance, the pitcher may return to the pitching position.

Any Rules not specifically covered in this section will be found in Part I of the current edition of the Official GulfCoast Sports Association Rulebook.

MASTERS SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL

The Masters Program shall consist of the 40 & Over Division and the 45 & Over Division.

The 40 & Over and the 45 & Over Divisions will be governed by the 50 & Over Division Rules of Major and AAA.

Sec. 1. The Masters divisions (40 years old and older) may use the Senior Bats. The BPF may not exceed 1.21. Any Senior or Masters play whatsoever using the Senior Bats of 1.21 BPF MAY use the .44 COR/375 LB compression softball. There are to be NO exceptions to this. Players MAY NOT use the Senior Bats in any tournament or league that is NOT a senior event (ALL participants 50 & Over), or a Masters Event (40 and Over or 45 and Over).

Note: ANYONE caught using a Senior bat in anything other than Senior or Masters Competition will result in an automatic OUT and will be ejected from the game immediately.

Sec. 2. The official Senior softball shall be a smooth-seamed, raised seam, concealed-stitch, or flat-surfaced ball. The center of the ball may be made of either long fiber kapok or a mixture of cork and rubber, and/or machine wound, with a fine twisted yarn and covered with latex or rubber cement. Or it may be made of other materials approved by the GulfCoast Sports Association. The cover of the ball shall be optic yellow, tanned horsehide, cowhide, or other materials approved by the GulfCoast Sports Association, cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover and sewn with red waxed cotton or red linen thread to form a red stitched softball. The solid core ball must be stamped with the official GulfCoast Sports Association logo (unless otherwise specified for a particular tournament) that contains the maximum C.O.R. and compression standards. The ball MAXIMUM C.O.R. is .44, and Maximum Compression for GulfCoast Sports Association softballs is 375 pounds with no tolerance.

Note: The men's division will use the twelve (12") softball and the women's division will use the eleven (11") softball.

Masters Division Home Run Rules:

MASTERS – Six (6) home runs plus the one up home run rule. Each untouched ball that goes over the fence in fair territory which exceeds the team's home run limit will be scored as a Dead Ball OUT. NO Baserunners will advance.

Any Rules not specifically covered in this section will be found in Part I of the current edition of the Official GulfCoast Sports Association Rulebook.