

Revised '80, '82, '83, '84, '85, '86, '87, '88,
'89, '90, '91, '92, '93, '95, '97, '98, '00, '01,
'03, & '04, '07, '08 & '09



U.S. House of Representatives

CONGRESSIONAL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION INVITATIONAL SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT RULES

VERSION 09.01

Unless otherwise stated in these rules, the tournament rules shall be the official rules of softball, written by the International Joint Rules Committee on Softball published by the Amateur Softball Association (ASA).

New rules are in bold italic print.

1.0 FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

- 1.1 The distance from base to base and from the pitcher's rubber to home plate shall be established by ASA. ***The white part of first base shall be fair territory, the colored part of first base shall be foul territory; but the foul line shall be established by the umpire or Tournament Official prior to the start of the game.***
- 1.2 Only softballs provided by Tournament Officials shall be used.
- 1.3 Only approved softball bats may be used. Baseball bats or altered bats may not be used. Taping of handles is permitted. A batter using an illegal bat shall be removed from the game. ***See list of 2003, 04 & 09 illegal bats on the Captain's rules' review sheet AND CURRENT ILLEGAL BATS LISTED ON THE WEB SITE.***
- 1.4 Metal cleats or spikes of any kind may not be used, including metal-tipped cleats. Players wearing such cleats (whether or not in the game ***at the time of discovery***) shall be ejected from that game.

2.0 SCHEDULING AND COMPLETION OF GAMES

- 2.1 The Tournament Officials shall schedule, terminate, interrupt, and reschedule all games as required.
- 2.2 The tournament pairings and initial schedule shall ***be made public by the Tournament Committee on the league web site***. The Tournament Committee assumes no responsibility ***for dissemination of the rules to individual players***. Schedule changes ***will be posted*** at least 24 hours prior to a newly-scheduled game.
- 2.3 Games shall not be postponed unless weather or field conditions are so severe that Tournament Officials determine an inability to play. All teams shall report to the designated field at their regularly scheduled times unless otherwise directed by Tournament Officials. ***IN OTHER WORDS, ALL GAMES WILL BE PLAYED...SOMETIMES EVEN IN THE RAIN, UNLESS NOTIFIED OTHERWISE.*** Team members should be warned that just because it is raining in one part of town, it's not necessarily raining at the ball fields.
- 2.4 Seven innings shall constitute a complete game, except as provided for in Rules 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, and 2.8. The Semi-finals and Championship games shall be no less than seven innings ***except as provided for in Rule 2.8.***
- 2.5 Once a game has begun, only Tournament Officials may interrupt or terminate the game on account of weather, field conditions, or time limitations as described in Rule 2.6. If at such a time when the Tournament Officials intercede:
- a.) the losing team has batted in at least four innings ***or has fallen behind in the score by a "sudden death" margin as provided for in Rule 2.9,*** the game shall be terminated and constitute an official game, or
- b.) the two teams are tied, or have failed to complete the requisite number of innings for an official game, the game shall be postponed and resumed from that point at which action was suspended at the earliest convenient date determined by Tournament Officials.

- 2.6 All games shall have a one hour time limit. Any inning starting prior to the time limit must be completed (unless the home team is ahead). No new inning may begin with five minutes or less remaining in the time limit (at the 55 minute point in the game). The time limit will be counted from the scheduled starting time unless the start is delayed by Tournament Officials. Interruptions caused by weather or uncontrolled circumstances will not count in the time limit. The time limit shall not be imposed—until the losing team has batted in at least four innings or until the score reaches a "sudden death" margin as provided for in Rule 2.9. except if the score is tied. This rule shall not apply during the Semi-finals and Championship games.
- 2.7 ***Any game that is played beyond the time limit due to a tied score or because the losing team has not batted the minimum number of innings (within the guidelines of Rule 2.6), shall have innings which begin after the time limit has expired.***
- 2.8 All games will begin as scheduled unless delayed by a prior game running over the time limit. The time limit shall begin on delayed games immediately after the line-ups have been recorded in the official scorebook. Team members should be ready to play fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled starting time. Teams unable to field a minimum number of players five (5) minutes past the designated starting time shall forfeit by a 7-0 score.
- 2.9 If after the losing team has batted in four (4) innings, one team's score is ***ten (10)*** or more runs greater than the other team's score (e.g. 12-2, 22-4, 11-0), the game shall be terminated and constitute an official game, except that in the Semi-finals or Championship games such inning shall be five (5) and such margin shall be fifteen (15) runs or more greater, ***(e.g., visitors go over ten runs in top of fifth, game is over, no home team at bat.)*** ***If at any point in the game one team's score reaches twenty (20) runs and the difference in the score is ten (10) runs or more, a "sudden death" margin shall be declared and the game shall end at that point.***
- 3.0 **TEAM COMPOSITION AND LINE-UP**
- 3.1 Each team shall be composed of at least eight (8) players, with three (3) or more females playing defense in the field. At all times three positions in each batting order shall be designated as "female positions" and only females may be inserted in those positions. ***Teams may have their entire team entered in another league, otherwise, may not include a partial roster composition of more than four (4) players from another Senate, House or Congressional League team, only two of which may be the same sex. Teams must field a catcher, and the battery (pitcher/catcher) shall be at all times 1 male and 1 female. Physically Challenged players shall be treated as set forth in the ASA Rule Book, and shall not count toward team composition rules.***
- 3.2 No player may play on more than one *CSL* team at any time during the tournament. Once a player has been certified on an official team roster ***and plays for a team, the player is considered part of that team and may not play, or wear a uniform in another team's dugout. A player who plays for more than one team shall cause all teams on which that player has participated to be expelled from the tournament.***
- 3.3 Prior to the start of each game, team captains shall submit a line-up and list of substitutes to the Tournament Officials. Line-up cards will be provided ***on the League web site.*** Persons not listed in the line-up or list of substitutes may not participate in that game. All names on the line-up or list of substitutes must appear on the official team roster entered on the League web site. Since all players should have photo ID's, players must also be able to prove their identity to the satisfaction of Tournament Officials. Failure to immediately verify a player's identity will result in the expulsion of that player's team from the tournament. ***At the pregame conference with officials, captains must declare how they will play their defensive outfield, i.e., four across or three outfielders and a shortfielder, and must keep that defense throughout the game.***
- 3.4 Substitutions must be reported to the umpire ***and/or*** official scorekeeper. Failure to report may result being declared batting out of order with outs called. A fielder failing to report prior to entry shall result in every batter (appearing at the plate in the inning the infraction was detected and while that fielder is in a defensive position) being awarded a base on balls when reported by the opposing team or noticed by a Tournament Official.
- 3.5 Once a player has left the game, that player may re-enter only once and only if that player was a starter, ***and may re-enter in the next half inning since removed from the game as prescribed in official ASA rules.*** Any player re-entering the game must bat in that player's original batting order position, and the substitute in that position must be removed for the duration of that game.

- a.) If an injury prevents a team from fielding three female players, the game shall be forfeited at that point.
- b.) If an injury prevents a team from fielding ten (or eleven if an EH is being used) players, but that team meets the minimum requirements for fielding a team (eight total and at least three being female), the game shall continue. However, when any injured player's vacated position in the batting order is up, it shall be declared an out the first time and then passed over without prejudice and a substitute who might arrive at the game after the injury may NOT enter in that batting order position for the remainder of that game.
- 3.6 A female may substitute for any other player (within the guidelines of Rule 3.4), and a male may substitute for a male at any time (within the guidelines of Rule 3.4) or for a female who is not occupying one of the three "female positions" in the batting order.
- 3.7 Extra Hitter. Teams may choose to utilize an extra hitter by adding an eleventh (11th) position to the line-up. The EH is a "starting position" which may be inserted anywhere in the batting order.

Limitations to the Extra Hitter Rule

- A.) An extra hitter cannot hit in place of any other starting batter since the EH is also a starting batter's position.
(All players in fielding positions must bat.)
- B.) If the initial line-up does not contain an EH, one may NOT be added once the game begins.
- C.) If the EH is included in the initial line-up, the position may NOT be dropped from the line-up once the game begins.
- 3.8 Deliberate attempts to violate line-up and substitution rules shall result in the elimination of the offending team from the tournament.
- 3.9 The home team shall be determined by a coin flip, *except in the case when two teams play consecutive games in the championship round. The home team in the first game shall be the visiting team in the second game..*
- 4.0 **BALLS AND STRIKES**
- 4.1 *Batters will begin with a one ball, one strike count, and given a courtesy foul before a strikeout is called.* All games shall be slow-pitch softball, and the pitcher MAY release the ball as prescribed in official ASA rules, which permits a backhanded delivery. A delivery which crosses over the ball from side to side is also permitted. (Tournament Officials will demonstrate acceptable releases prior to games.) Maximum heights for pitches are confined to twelve (12) feet and minimum heights must clear the top of the pitcher's head. Each pitch must arc and called by the umpire according to Rules 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4.
- 4.2 A "ball" shall be called by the umpire when the pitcher throws a pitch which:
- a.) touches the ground before reaching the plate, or
 - b.) hits the plate including the black edge of the plate, or
 - c.) crosses below both of the batter's knees, or
 - d.) has a downward flight above both of the batter's shoulders, or
 - e.) has an arc higher than twelve (12) feet, or
 - f.) has no arc, or
 - g.) is in the umpire's judgment not hittable (i.e. more than four (4) inches from the outside of home plate and two (2) inches from the inside of home plate), or
 - h.) violates Rule 6.1.***
- 4.3 A "strike" shall be called if a batter:
- a.) swings and misses a ball, or
 - b.) swings and hits the ball foul.
- 4.4 A "strike" shall be called by the umpire if in his judgment the pitch is hittable and is not a ball as defined by Rule 4.2. Hittable pitches are those which cross that space over any part of the plate or that area from four (4) inches outside the plate to two (2) inches inside the plate between the batter's highest shoulder and lowest knee when the batter assumes a natural batting stance.

- 4.5 The pitcher may intentionally walk a batter by so indicating the choice to the home plate umpire after that batter has stepped into the batter's box, or may intentionally throw a pitch which is called a ball by the umpire. When the fourth of any of the pitches is called a ball, the batter shall be awarded *the appropriate base or bases*.
- 4.6 ***If a male batter, preceding one of the three designated female batting positions, is walked, the male batter will go directly to second base. The female must bat if less than two outs. If two outs, the female batter has the option to also walk if she indicates her choice prior to entering the batter's box.***
- 4.7 A "strike out" shall be called when:
- a.) a batter with two strikes, swings and misses, or
 - b.) a batter with two strikes, hits a foul ball, or
 - c.) a batter with two strikes is called out by the umpire *for failing to swing at a "hittable" pitch*.
- 4.8 A foul ball caught behind home plate must have been over the head of the batter (ASA Rule) to be called out, except for a foul on the third strike.
- 5.0 **HITTING AND BASERUNNING**
- 5.1 Bunting is not permitted. Anyone who, in the judgment of the umpire, attempts a bunt will be called out.
- 5.2 ***The homerun limitation shall be Class "C"—three (3) homeruns.*** After the homerun limit is reached by both teams, a plus one (1) rule will take effect. That is, either team may hit one (1) homerun on its opponent once both teams have reached the prescribed homerun limit. ***All batted balls over the fence without assistance, which do not meet the aforementioned criteria will result in the batter being awarded first base.***
- 5.3 ***A batter/runner shall always use the colored portion of first base while running from home to first base, unless a clear hit allows the runner to round the base, in which case the runner may use any portion of first base. The use of the white portion without a clear hit shall result in the runner being called out.*** A runner shall not leave the base until the ball crosses the plate. Any runner who leaves the base before the ball crosses the plate shall be called out and the play declared dead. Leaving the base is defined as movement away from the base area toward another base. Stealing bases is not permitted.
- 5.4 A runner may not advance on a "wild pitch" or "passed ball."
- 5.5 The ball is dead after the pitch crosses the plate until the pitcher is ready to deliver the next pitch. Baserunners may not advance if the catcher makes an errant return throw to the pitcher. On legal appeal plays, the ball is dead and runners may not advance.
- 5.6 Sliding is permitted, and encouraged to avoid collisions.
- 5.7 Infield Fly. Whenever runners are on first and second bases or first, second, and third bases, with less than two outs, and a batter hits a pop-up in fair territory and within the ordinary range of an infielder, the batter shall be declared out, and the runners may advance at their own peril.
- 5.8 On an overthrow:
- a.) that goes "out of play," all runners will be awarded the base they were advancing toward when the throw was released by the fielder, plus one base. ***(If more than one runner is involved, runners may advance only as far as one base behind the preceding runner.)***
 - b.) that remains in play, the runners may advance, at their own peril, as many bases as possible.
- 5.9 A runner shall be called "out" for interference and the play declared dead, if:
- a.) the runner interferes with a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball or a thrown ball, or
 - b.) the runner intentionally interferes with a thrown ball, or a fielder throwing a ball. If the interference is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, ***the lead runner on base*** shall also be called "out" and the ball is dead.

The runner shall at all times attempt to avoid the fielder who is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball except for those instances listed in Rule 5.10.

- 5.10 A runner shall be called "out," ejected from the game, and suspended from at least one successive tournament game by the Tournament Officials if that runner maliciously or recklessly runs into a fielder .

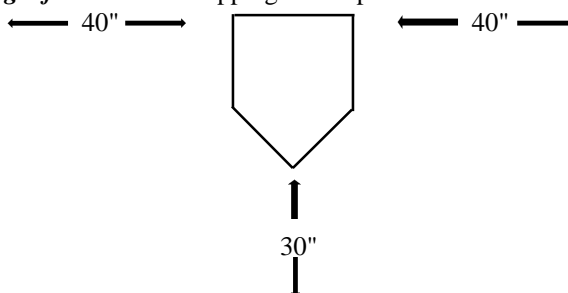
A runner shall be deemed to have acted maliciously or recklessly unless:

- a.) the collision is accidental, or
- b.) the fielder is blocking the base path and is not involved in the play, or
- c.) the fielder moves after the runner has attempted to avoid a collision, or
- d.) the fielder is blocking the base to which the runner is trying to advance.

In such situations, runners may not use their heads, shoulders, or forearms to initiate the collision. Open palms or the full body are acceptable. **Male runners may NOT run into a defensive female player unless sliding.**

- 5.11 Batter's Box. Batters shall stand within forty (40) inches of either side of home plate and within thirty (30) inches of the point of the plate. A batter lining up outside this box shall be warned by the umpire. Any further pitches will be declared an automatic "strike" and play declared dead (the batter may not swing and hit the ball).

A batter shall be called "out" only when **hitting a fair ball and** stepping on the plate or across the line of the inside front corner of home plate.



6.0 FIELDING

- 6.1 **As prescribed in official ASA rules, the pitcher's motion must begin from a stopped, standing position on the pitcher's rubber** and shall begin within twenty (20) seconds of receiving the ball. **One foot must be in contact with the rubber until the release of the ball.**
- 6.2 Any fielder not involved in a play and who is blocking the path of a baserunner, **including the fielder who uses the colored part of first base**, shall be called for obstructing the runner. The runner shall be awarded any additional bases at the end of play if, in the umpire's judgment, the runner would have attempted and safely advanced toward those bases. **This rule does NOT allow male players to run into defensive female players.**
- 6.3 Any fielder decoying a runner into an unnecessary slide shall be ejected from that game without warning.
- 6.4 **When a female is at bat, the defense must remain in the declared positioning described in Rule 3.3 and outfielders must be no closer to the infield than 120 feet from home plate (twice the distance of the basepath) until the ball is hit.**

7.0 MISCELLANEOUS

- 7.1 Any player, coach, or fan who is ejected from a game must immediately leave the athletic facilities (fields, stands, parking lots and surrounding grounds within one-half mile of the field) before the game can continue. Failure to vacate the facilities within five (5) minutes will result in the expulsion of that team from the tournament. Any person who is ejected from a game is automatically suspended from at least one successive tournament game (**which may carry over to another tournament**).
- 7.2 Beer will be provided free of charge to teams participating in the Semi-finals. **Teams reaching the final twelve round must pay an additional \$25 umpire's fee before continuing play in the tournament, and the final four teams must pay another \$25 umpire's fee.** Trophies will be awarded to the final four surviving teams. Entry fees are not refundable in as much as expenditures for the operation of the tournament have been committed.
- 7.3 All disputes shall be settled by Tournament Officials and/or umpires at the facility. Tournament Officials' decisions are final. An umpire's judgment cannot be appealed. **The homeplate umpire is responsible for the enforcement of rules but must notify both coaches of a sanction before teams must comply with said sanction.**
- 7.4 Fighting will result in automatic expulsion from ALL tournament games.

- 7.5 Each team will designate two individuals to represent the team in any dispute or rules clarification. Prolonged or abusive argumentation will result in ejection. Judgment calls such as balls and strikes or out and safe may be questioned only for clarification purposes by any player. Interpretation of rules may be questioned only by a team’s designated representative. Profanity or physical abuse directed at an umpire will result in ejection and will lead to suspension from at least one successive game at the discretion of Tournament Officials.
- 7.6 Coaches must remain in the coach’s boxes at all times. A runner shall be called out if a coach touches that runner while the ball is in play. A coach must avoid opposing players who are attempting to field a ball. If contact or interference occurs, outs shall be called accordingly.
- 7.7 Only the on-deck batter is permitted in the area designated “in play.” All other players must remain in the dugout or outside the playing area immediately surrounding the dugout. ***Only players who are listed on the official roster may enter the field of play or stay in the dugout.*** No player or spectator will be permitted to stand behind the backstop and distract players.
- 7.8 In the event that a team is eliminated from the tournament for rules violations, all previously played tournament games’ results shall not be altered and the eliminated team’s next round opponent shall be awarded a bye, except if the next round is the Championship game. If the next round is the Championship game, the eliminated team’s last opponent (during the Semi-finals) shall play in the Championship game. If the violation occurs in the Championship game, the violating team’s opponent shall be awarded the Championship and the violating team’s Semi-finals opponent shall be awarded second place.
- 7.9 All teams shall conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. A player who acts in such a manner as to confuse the opposing team or gain an advantage through unsportsmanlike tactics shall be called out or ejected from the game. Teams will be responsible for the conduct of their fans as well as for their own conduct. All teams should be prepared to provide a competent scorer should the need arise.
- 7.10 The Tournament Committee shall consist of the following Tournament Officials:

George Burke, Chairman	Gary J. Caruso, Director
Greg Budnik, Rules & Umpires	Nancy Alcalde, Trophies & Awards
Patrick Jones, Fields & Security	Stephanie Hague, Scheduling

TEAM SELECTIONS AND PAIRINGS

The seeding process used by the Tournament Committee is based on the league rankings calculated on the League web site—the total weighted winning percentage ranks teams by taking into account forfeits and the strength of each team's opponents' records at the time of play during the season.

In the past, the pairings were based mostly on a single elimination bracket system. This year teams have been once again grouped in a system that allows teams to play at least 2 games before elimination. These preliminary groups consist of pairings of 3-team or 4-team groups — dependent upon date available to play, time of day available to play and season rankings — with one team advancing to the "Dazzling Dozen©" finals. As in recent years, the tournament committee strives for more double-elimination play. This year, 12 teams will advance from the preliminary groupings. Of those 12, the top four ranked teams (re-seeded according to new rankings that include tournament play) will receive a bye while the remaining 8 teams will play a round to vie for the remaining 4 slots and enter a traditional 8-team double-elimination process. Note the separate Group Schedule link for the preliminary rounds and the Bracket link for the final rounds on the league web site.

The season's ranking system is used to rank teams in the preliminary round groupings. Each group has at least one team from the top third, middle third and bottom third of the rankings list. Each team was also seeded according to its August Saturday participation availability.

The Elite Eight will play a double elimination series which is included in a bracket separate from the initial groupings. *Dates, times, and field locations are located between each bracket.*



***U.S. House of Representatives
Congressional Athletic Association
31st Annual Congressional Tournament***

Important Rules for Team Captains to pass along to their players

The items below may be unfamiliar and should be relayed to all players regarding the tournament:

- 1.) ➡ Teams must be ready to play **15 minutes prior to their start times** (except for the first games of the day on each field). Being ready to play means **actually starting the game 15 minutes prior** to the scheduled start time.
- 2.) When your team plays a doubleheader where the second game is played immediately after the first game (without an hour between games), your team location may be changed if your game ends before your next round opponent's game ends. In other words, you may be sent to the other field to wait for that game to end with your next opponent so that the field you vacated may start a game for the next time slot that has two teams waiting. Tournament officials will decide location changes at the fields.
- 3.) ➡ With more games now played, to hold the line on the tournament fee for each team, teams that move into the "Dazzling Dozen©" will be required to pay an umpire's fee of \$25. The final four teams will pay another \$25.
- 4.) The format for the "Elite Eight" and "Final Four" **MAY** change due to weather-related reductions of time slots. If that situation should arise, the remaining teams would play on the same day that the final rounds begin. All games would be subject to the 55-minute time limit until the last two teams play each other. That game (if the undefeated team wins) or those games (if both teams have one loss) will be the only games that consist of seven innings with no time limit.
- 5.) ➡ Tournament rules change for 2009. Players will **go to bat with one ball and one strike** on them. This will help play more innings within the time limits of tournament games. A courtesy foul will be given according to ASA rules. ➡ ➡ **Male runners may NOT run into a female defensive player unless sliding.**
- 6.) ➡ ASA rules governing homerun limitations per game will be enforced. For this tournament, the limitation shall be Class "C" —three (3) homeruns. After the homerun limit is reached by both teams, a plus one (1) rule will take effect. That is, either team may hit one (1) homerun on its opponent once both teams have reached the prescribed homerun limit. All batted balls over the fence without assistance, which do not meet the aforementioned criteria will result in the batter being awarded first base.
- 7.) As usual, baseball bats may NOT be used at any time. In **2003, '04 & '09**, ASA instituted rules changes governing the legality of bats. For this tournament, legal 2009 ASA bats and bats initially manufactured as official softball bats which have not been altered are considered legal for this tournament, **EXCEPT** for 2004 bats listed separately **AND** the 2003 bats listed below. To use bats listed below, they must be recertified by the manufacturer (marked on either end of the bat and/or laser engraved along the side). Some bats with an ASA logo are still illegal and listed in 2009 ASA rules.

<i>DeMarini:</i>	<i>B-52, Doublewall Classic, Doublewall Demolition, Doublewall Distance, & Fatboy</i>
Louisville Slugger:	SB103 (a.k.a. Genesis)
<i>Miken:</i>	<i>Velocit-E Ultra (Balanced) & Velocit-E Ultra (Maxload)</i>
Steele's:	Triple XXX
<i>Worth:</i>	<i>3DX, EST5, EST23, ESTL PST (a.k.a. PST 137) & SSEST</i>



Additional National Rules that Apply to the Tournament

Rule 3.5 c.) ONCE each inning, the batting team may substitute a runner for a batter who has reached base. The substitute runner must be the same gender as the batter. The “Once-An-Inning” substitute runner is NOT governed by the substitution rules of the Tournament. The substitute runner may be ANY other player (of the same gender) on the team regardless of whether or not the substitute is also at that time in the batting order or regardless of whether or not the substitute has previously left the game.

PENALTY: If the substitute runner is also in the batting order, but is still on base when the substitute’s time to bat has arrived, the substitute’s vacant batting order position shall be called an out.