

**Fall 2011 Season**  
**SPSA PLAYING RULES**  
**12-U Recreation League Softball**  
**Clarifications from the previous season are underlined**

I. ASA RULES

- A. Teams shall play by the most current edition of the ASA Official Rules of Softball, with the exceptions and/or additions of the following Playing Rules, which shall apply.

II. EQUIPMENT

- A. All equipment must be ASA approved.  
B. Softballs to be used each season shall be ASA approved. Each team will provide one (1) new softball at the start of the game.  
C. ASA approved safety bases, including a double bag at first base, will be used in all games.  
D. All players shall wear chinstraps and facemasks on their batting helmets. Chinstraps and facemasks shall be appropriately matched to the manufacturer's brand batting helmet, correctly attached and secure to their batting helmet and worn anytime the player is on the field as an offensive player.

III. UMPIRES

- A. SPSA certified Umpires will be used for all games.  
B. Two (2) Umpires shall be provided for all league games. If two (2) umpires are not present at the scheduled start time, the game will be played with one (1) umpire.  
C. This is an Instructional League. Therefore, umpires are encouraged to provide feedback. After time has been called by an umpire, an umpire should inform the player and coach as to the infraction. It is the umpire's decision to determine if a team has gained an advantage. If the umpire determines that a team has gained an advantage as a result of the infraction, the umpire may return all offensive players to the base they occupied when the pitch was made and replay the pitch, or enforce the rule regarding the violation.

IV. STARTING OF GAMES – TIME LIMITS – TIE GAMES – RAIN DELAYS

- A. All teams must be ready to play at the scheduled start time. Failure to be ready to play will result in forfeiture.  
B. Games are limited to one hour and thirty minutes (90 minutes) of playing time. **There will be no new inning started after 1 hour and 10 minutes (70 minutes) of play.** A full seven (7) inning games shall be played except as specified in Section IV, Paragraph B-1, B-2.

**If a game is tied at the end of regulation time as defined above, the game shall continue for one additional inning under the ASA International Tie Breaker rule. The ITB inning shall commence with placing a runner on second base. The runner placed at second base shall be the player scheduled to bat last in the inning.**

**If a game is tied after the additional inning, then a tie shall be declared. Run limit for the ITB inning shall be the same as a standard inning, 4 runs.**

1. An eight (8) run lead after the completion of five (5) innings of play shall constitute a game regardless of time.

2. A maximum of three (3) outs or three (3) runs will constitute and offensive inning for the first four innings or one hour of game time. All innings after that point will have a maximum of eight (8) runs per each half inning. This is considered an open inning. In an effort to allow maximum participation and playing time, even if the home team cannot win because of run limits, and if there is time remaining, the game will be continued until the time limit is reached. **Exception** – After one hour and twenty minutes and a team is mathematically eliminated, the option to continue or end the game is given to the team that has been mathematically eliminated. (See interpretation at end of rules.)
  3. The official starting time shall be determined by the plate umpire and recorded in the official score book of the home team. The expiration of time shall be determined by the home plate umpire.
  4. At the end of one (1) hour and the end of that completed inning, or at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, the umpire shall declare the remainder of the game “Open” until the one hour and thirty minute (90 minutes) time limit is reached, 7 innings are complete, or the eight (8) run rule (Section IV, Paragraph B-1) is declared.
- C. In the event of a rain delay where two (2) or more games are scheduled, the first (1<sup>st</sup>) game shall be continued after the delay until one hour and thirty minutes (90 minutes) of playing time has elapsed, with the same rule governing ties as specified in Section IV, Paragraph B. The second (2<sup>nd</sup>) game shall be played at the conclusion of the first game if the lateness of the hour permits, however, **in no case shall the second game start after 9:00P.** If the first game cannot be resumed within 45 minutes, the game will be cancelled and rescheduled. The second game will be played as scheduled if weather and field conditions permit.

## V. PROTEST

- A. All protests are eliminated from League games. The Home Plate umpire will have final authority on any game situations.

## VI. MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Teams must be comprised of ten (10) players if available. If not, the game may be played with eight (8) players and will be considered a regulation game. As soon as the eight (8) players are available within the twenty (20) minute grace period of the first scheduled game, the game must start. If a player leaves the game for any reason after coming to bat, reducing the lineup to nine players if the team started with ten players, or eight players if the team started with nine players, an automatic out will be taken at her place in the batting order. If the game is able to start with eight or nine players, one out will be taken for the ninth or tenth batter.
- B. The batting order shall consist of all the players on the team roster.
- C. **A player may not sit out two (2) consecutive innings on defense.**
- D. The Infield Fly Rule is in effect.
- E. The Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike Rule is in effect.
- F. Base Stealing Clarification – Base runners may leave the base once the ball has left the pitchers hand. If a base runner leaves the base early (prior to the pitcher delivering a pitch), they will be called out by the umpire.
- G. **Base runners may steal home on a pitched ball, or on a passed ball.**
- H. The ASA Look-Back rule is in effect. Refer to ASA Rule 8, Section 7, Article T.
- I. Borrowing players to avoid forfeit. Teams may borrow a player from another 12-U Team from the Association, in their age division or a younger age division, to bring their minimum players up to the legal number of players required.  
**A borrowed player may not be used in postseason play.**  
**A borrowed player may not pitch or catch for the team.**  
**A borrowed player does not have to wear a matching jersey.**

**A borrowed player must be the last batter in the lineup. If more than one borrowed player exists in a game, all borrowed players must bat last in the lineup.**

**A borrowed player may play for the same team a maximum of two times per season.**

- J. Managers are responsible for the conduct of their Coaches, Players and Spectators at all times. If a Manager and/or Coach is removed from a game, He/She will be suspended for the next game. If the Manager and/or Coach is removed from a second game during the same season, He/She will be suspended for the next two (2) games. Should the Manager/Coach be removed from a 3<sup>rd</sup> game during the same season, He/She will be suspended the remainder of the season. The season is defined as any league or tournament games from March 1<sup>st</sup> – June 1<sup>st</sup> and September 1<sup>st</sup> - November 1<sup>st</sup> of the current calendar year. Suspension rules for spectators are the same as for managers / coaches.
- K. At the discretion of the Manager and/or Coach on offense, the On-Deck Batter shall be allowed to stand in the On-Deck Circle behind the batter, regardless of which dugout the offensive team occupies.

## VII. 12-U PITCHING RULES:

1. Pitching Distance will be 40' from the front of the pitching rubber to the back of the plate.
2. There is no arc requirement for the pitch. Pitchers will be encouraged to pitch flat with a full windmill motion. There will be no penalty for pitchers throwing with a slingshot motion.
3. A batter who is hit by a pitch is entitled to 1st base. This includes any pitch that hits the ground prior to hitting the batter, unless the batter offers to swing at the pitch. **If, in the umpire's judgment, the batter does not make a reasonable attempt to avoid being hit by the errant pitch, the base award may be revoked.**

Run Rule interpretation from Section VII, Paragraph B, Section 2.

If, after 5 complete innings, or 4-1/2 with home team ahead by 8+ runs, or if they go-ahead by 8 runs that score in bottom of 5th, game over by run rule, regardless of time, (4-B.1). If after 4+ innings, visiting team is ahead by 9+, and 1:20 hits during the inning, the home team is then mathematically eliminated since they can only score 8; we want to allow the game to continue the 1:30 of game time, to allow maximum playing time (4-B.2). The EXCEPTION is to clarify that continuing relative to 4-B.2 (only) is the sole option of the losing home team; they can walk away if they wish (the winning team can't force them to keep playing), or they can request to keep playing if they wish.