



UNITED STATES FASTPITCH ASSOCIATION

11th
Edition
Rulebook



2010 Quick Reference Rule Changes

3008: A player's age on December 31st of the previous calendar year determines the age classification in which the player is eligible to participate. Teams are no longer required to Age-Up in the Fall, however, those teams playing between September 1st and December 31st must re-register in the age classification they will play the following season to receive points toward the following years State and National events.

6007: Stalling: Umpire has a right to end a conference early if the umpire determines a coach is trying to stall a game. This call will not be questioned or appealed by a coach. Any conference or time out within the last 5 minutes of a timed game will result in the game clock being suspended until play resumes.

USFA World Series Qualification Guidelines:

1. Teams must be USFA Sanctioned.
2. Must do at least one of the following:
 - a. Receive a direct berth at a National Invitational Tournament.
 - b. Attend at least 1 State Qualifier or NIT (any state).
 - c. Attend at least 1 State Qualifier and have accumulated at least 100 points.
3. Attend the USFA State Tournament **in your home state** or a Regional Qualifier Tournament for your area.
4. Receive an at-large berth if no USFA events are available within 200 miles of your team's home.

NOTE: Teams that have received a berth to a "A" classification National event in USFA or another organization must play in the USFA "A" World Series. Furthermore, any team that has been classified as an "A" team or participates in an "A" State Tournament hosted by USFA or another organization may be required to play in the USFA "A" World Series.

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These are the general rules of Girl’s Fastpitch Softball. We believe that they should be simple and easy to read. This is the same basic format of rulebooks from many years ago. Throughout the years, many organizations have added to the basic rules so much that the rulebooks have become very complex and hard to follow. There needs to be rules to regulate the game. It is our hope that the game can be played in the manner set forth by these guidelines. Let’s get the girls on the field and let them play this game the way it is supposed to be played. I would like to thank all of the Fastpitch coaches and umpires that have helped to create this book in a streamline fashion. We do not want to leave any important information out of this book, but we do not want to sacrifice the simplicity of the format either. I would like to thank all of the participants of USFA. It is the great teams, parents, coaches and umpires that make the USFA the premiere Fastpitch organization in the country. It is our goal to continue to grow in a positive direction. We are Fastpitch people running a strictly Fastpitch organization. It is with great honor and duty that we serve the USFA Fastpitch family.

USFA Official Rules of Girls' Fastpitch

The following rules are the official United States Fastpitch Association rules that will be in effect at all Regional and National tournaments. Local areas may modify these rules to conform to their local high school rules and recreational league rules only. Optional rules are common in regards to coach pitch versus machine pitch in younger divisions. Using 11 defensive players in younger divisions is a recreational option designed to get more girls in the game. Some states allow high school pitchers to take a backward step during the pitching delivery. Local options are not necessarily endorsed by USFA, but demonstrate the flexibility and tolerance of the USFA. The USFA will always be about the “can do’s” and not the “can’t do’s”. Safety rules are **NOT FLEXIBLE**. We will adhere to all safety rules in their fullest, including safety rules that are mandated by the governing body of softball. In order to keep the USFA Rulebook as streamlined as possible, we will refer back to the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) rulebook for all rules and case studies that have been established throughout the evolution of the sport.

Official Pitching Rules

1001: Before the pitcher pitches the ball, she must do the following:

1. Have possession of the ball in either the pitching hand or the glove hand.
2. Have both hands separated as she steps onto the rubber.
3. Have both feet in contact with the rubber.
4. Pitcher must take or simulate taking signs while on the rubber from the catcher only.

1002: The pitch begins when the hands are no longer separated. The pitch delivery can be aborted by pitcher stepping off the rubber in a backward step with her plant foot.

1003: The delivery must start no less than one second and no more than 10 seconds after the hands are in contact with each other.

1004: Pitcher's delivery:

1. Windmill or Slingshot style is acceptable.
2. Arm movement must be an underhand motion.
3. Pitcher may use backward movement of the pitching arm at the start of delivery, however, a backward step is not permitted.
4. If the underhanded arm movement is more than 12" away from the parallel of the body, the pitch will be considered a sidearm pitch.
5. A "Leap" or a "Crow Hop" is not permitted during the pitching delivery, the plant foot cannot replant. There is no replanting of the foot allowed. The replanting of the foot is considered a "Crow Hop".

1005: Pitcher cannot stop her motion before the ball leaves her hand.

1006: If the pitcher stops her wind up (unless the umpire calls time for some reason) without releasing the ball, an illegal pitch will be called and a ball will be awarded to the batter and base runners will advance one base.

1007: Pitcher cannot have anything distracting on her pitching arm, hand, or wrist. Any sweatband must be flesh in color on pitching wrist or arm.

1008: Pitcher can ask the umpire for a different ball at any given time before the start of her pitch. During wet conditions, a coach can towel dry the balls for the pitcher.

1009: Intentional Walk: If the pitcher desires to intentionally walk a batter, she must notify the umpire of her intentions prior to the first pitch to that batter and the walk will be granted by the umpire. No pitches need to be thrown to the intentionally walked batter.

Batting and Base Running

The United States Fastpitch Association will use the following basic rules for batting and base running:

2001: The girl is considered the batter when she takes her place in the batter's box.

2002: The batter can call time by lifting her hand and stepping one foot out of the box. The umpire can grant the batter time out if the pitcher has not started her pitch. If time is not granted, she will take the called pitch.

2003: Batting out of order can be appealed to the umpire by the defense:

- 1. Infraction appealed during illegal batter:** the correct batter takes over and assumes the pitch count.
- 2. Infraction appealed after illegal batter has batted but before next pitch:** the girl that should have batted is out and any base advances will return to their position prior to the illegal batter's bat. The correct spot in the lineup will be the batter that follows the girl called out. Example: (Batter #5 is the girl called out. The correct spot in the lineup would now be Batter #6.)
- 3. Infraction appealed after illegal batter has batted and after next pitch:** the play stands. All base runners remain where they are.
- 4. Batter positions on the lineup sheet are determined by the player's name and not the jersey number. Improperly recorded position numbers and player numbers are correctable errors.**

2004: The batter is out when the following happens:

- 1. Batter steps on the plate when hitting the ball in fair or foul territory.**
- 2. Batter steps out of the batter's box when hitting ball in fair territory.**
- 3. Batter fouls off third strike while trying to bunt.**
- 4. Catcher catches third strike foul tip.**

2005: The batter can advance to first base when the following happens:

1. Batter is pitched 4 balls.
2. Batter is hit by pitch (unless the ball is in the strike zone or swung at).
3. Catcher drops third strike with one or less outs with no base runner occupying first base or with two outs regardless of occupation of first base.

Exception to dropped 3rd strike: If the batter enters the dead ball area, she will be called out. This takes away a lot of judging by the umpire if the girl was walking to the dugout or not.

4. When the catcher interferes with the batter's bat while batter is swinging at the pitched ball, or anytime during a pitch. If the ball is put in play during the interference, the offensive coach has the option to take the result of the play or the interference.

2006: The base runner must run the bases in order when advancing or retreating.

2007: When a base runner misses a bag, the play is appealable to the umpire by the defensive coach or any player on the field. Appeal must be made before the next pitch (except coach pitch) is delivered.

2008: If a base runner attempts to advance to the next base while the pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitcher's circle, she must continue to the next base. Any attempt to retreat back to the previous base (without pitcher attempting to make a play on the base runner) will result in the base runner being called out. This is called "hesitation" or "look back" rule. (The base runner can turn the corner and immediately look for the ball. This is not an attempt to advance to the next base.)

2009: Base runners may attempt to steal only after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand during her delivery of the pitch.

2010: Base runner cannot run out of the base path to avoid a tag. This will result in base runner being called out.

Base Path: The path between the bases. 3ft on both sides of the bag that run parallel from the base pad and centerline. Base runner's position also establishes base path.

2011: Base runner should avoid contact with the defensive player at any base if there is a defensive play being made. (This is for the safety of the girls). Any aggressive act will result in base runner being called out. Neither the catcher nor any other defensive player may block a base or home plate without having possession of the ball.

2012: Base runner cannot interfere with a defensive player making a play on the ball. This results in the runner being called out and all base runners returning to previous bag before the interference occurred (unless forced to advance). The batter/runner is deemed safe at first base.

2013: If a batted ball hits a base runner prior to passing or being touched by a defensive player (non-pitcher), the base runner is called out. In addition, if the runner interferes with an attempt by the defense to field the ball, the base runner will be called out.

2014: Base runner cannot leave her base during a caught fly ball until the ball is touched by defensive player's glove or body.

Official Lineup of Players and Substitutes

The United States Fastpitch Association has adapted the following rules. The official lineups are for league and tournament play. They will be used for all State, Regional and National play.

3001: Team must start with nine defensive players.

3002: Another option is using "extra players". Using nine regular players and up to three "extra players". There would be 10, 11 or 12 total players on the lineup sheet. Any nine can be used in the field with 10, 11 or 12 batters.

(This lineup is designed to get more players in the game). Three of the players would have EP as their position. Any of the 10, 11 or 12 players can be used for defense. The coach can change the defensive players at any time using the 10, 11 or 12 players from the lineup sheet. EP must be used the entire game. If a player gets injured and there are no substitutes on the bench, the injured player's name is scratched through the lineup. There is no out penalty as long as there are at least 9 players left on the lineup.

DEFO Position: In addition to the 3 EPs allowed under USFA rules, teams may also add a "defense only" player to their lineups.

Rule Clarification: USFA rules allow for up to 13 players in the lineup, (12 of which may bat) by using nine regular players, up to three "extra players" (EPs) and a "defense only player" (DEFO). There may be 9, 10, 11, 12, or 13 total players on the lineup sheet. Any nine can be used on defense, with 9, 10, 11, or 12 batters. For purposes of simplicity, if a coach chooses to use a DEFO and only 9 batters, one of the 9 batters will be considered an EP.

Exception: If the DEFO is used, that player must remain on defense throughout the game, unless inserted into the lineup "once" for any of the three EPs, or replaced on defense, in which case the DEFO position would be eliminated for the remainder of the game.

3003: Substitute players shall be listed on the lineup sheet. They can be used at any given time during the game. The original player can re-enter the game at any given time. The substitute may also re-enter once.

3004: Courtesy runners are allowed for pitchers and catchers. The courtesy runner must be used prior to the next pitch being delivered. Courtesy runner will be a substitute player. If there are no substitute players, the courtesy runner will be the last completed at bat. If the last completed at bat is a pitcher or catcher, the courtesy runner will revert to the batter immediately preceding her in the batting order.

NOTE: For purposes of defining a courtesy runner, a substitute is defined as any member of the team written on the lineup sheet who is not currently in the batting order, regardless if the player was previously in the batting order or not.

3005: All lineup sheets will be turned in at the start of the game. One copy will be given to the plate umpire and one copy will be given to the opposing team.

3006: If a player is lost to injury or illness, that space in the lineup will be scratched through unless there are less than 9 players on the lineup sheet. In that case, the affected spot will be an out when that spot comes up in the order (unless there is a substitute player available to go in that spot).

3007: Any player ejected from the game will result in an out when that spot in the lineup comes up, unless there is a substitute player available to go in that spot. Minimum requirements for fielding a team are still active. A team must have a minimum of 9 players on the lineup card, but can finish with a minimum of 8 players. The missing player in the batting order would be an out. Less than 8 fieldable players on the team will result in forfeit for that team.

3008: A player's age on December 31st of the previous calendar year determines the age classification in which the player is eligible to participate. Teams are no longer required to Age-Up in the Fall, however, those teams playing between September 1st and December 31st must re-register in the age classification they will play the following season to receive points toward the following years State and National events.

3009: Age groups will be broken down as follows:
6-Under, 8-Under, 10-Under, 12-Under, 14-Under, 16-Under, 18-Under, 18-Over, High School. Due to small numbers of kids in some local leagues, age groups can be modified to meet the needs of a league.

Basics of Playing the Game

These are the basic playing rules adapted by the United States Fastpitch Association. We will not mention the very basics, which are universal. Balls, strikes, outs, foul ball, fair ball, defensive interference, offensive interference, home run, triple, double, single, walk, strike out, etc. These are some of the fundamental parts of the game that have been a part of the game since it was invented. Any organization that changes these rules is changing the foundation of the game.

4001: The plate is considered fair territory. A hit ball that hits the plate and remains fair or rests on the plate is considered a fair ball.

4002: The strike zone is when a pitched ball crosses any part of the plate in width and crosses anywhere from the batter's knees to her solar plex.

4003: The game will be seven innings, unless a run rule comes into effect or the game has been established in advance with a time limit.

4004: The run rule will be 12 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings, and 8 runs after 5 innings.

4005: Tie game after 7 innings or expired game time limit:

1. Some leagues will play extra innings until a winner is determined.
2. Tournaments will use International Tiebreaker. (The last completed at bat in the previous inning becomes a base runner at second base. Play until a winner is determined).
3. Some tournament formats will leave games in a tie due to scheduling restraints and maintaining a daily tournament schedule.

4006: Determining home team:

1. Leagues may pre-determine this on a schedule or use coin toss.

2. Tournaments will use coin toss before the start of the game. It is customary to let the team that has come the farthest distance call the coin toss.

4007: When the ball is “dead”:

1. When “no pitch” is called by the umpire.
2. When a fly ball in foul territory is not caught.
3. Offensive interference.
4. When the batter or base runner is hit by the batted ball before the ball is touched by a fielder.
5. When the umpire calls “time”.

4008: When the ball is “live”:

1. Any batted fair ball.
2. Any fair ball that is in the playable field of play.
3. Any and all times before an umpire calls “time”.
4. When an umpire is hit by a thrown ball or batted ball.
5. When a base coach is accidentally hit by a thrown ball.

Equipment

This is the equipment to be used while playing in official United States Fastpitch Association events. As a rule, equipment must be standard approved equipment that is properly marked with “Official Softball” or similar markings that certify the equipment. All official safety equipment must be used and properly marked as certified.

5001: All bats must be unaltered official softball bats. The umpire will check all bats prior to the game. Any illegal bats will be removed from the dugout prior to the game. All bats must be stamped with BPF 1.20 or less. The governing body of softball maintains a list of illegal bats and USFA will enforce this. Use of illegal bat will result in an automatic out and ejection of player using the bat. Non-compliance will lead to offending player and coach being ejected from the game.

5002: A USFA stamped (Baden) game ball or the equivalent must be used in all USFA sanctioned events. All 12U-18 and over division balls must be 12” in diameter with .47 C.O.R. and .375 compression. 10-under must use 11” diameter with .47 C.O.R. and .375 compression.

Color and stitching are optional, as long as all the balls are the same in color for any one game. Check website for updated list of illegal balls. Non-compliance will lead to offending coach being ejected from the game.

5003: All batting helmets and catching gear must be approved and in original condition. (Numbers and personalized designs are okay). PLAYER SAFETY IS THE MAIN CONCERN.

5004: Shoes and socks must be worn and plastic cleats are recommended. (Metal cleats are allowed for 16-U, 18-U, 18 and over and High School divisions).

5005: Hats and visors are permissible. They are optional between each individual player.

5006: All jewelry is prohibited. The only exception being medical alert bracelets, which must be worn on the glove hand. Non-compliance will lead to offending player and coach being ejected from the game.

5007: Numbers must be worn on uniforms, with no 2 players on a team having the same number.

5008: All Helmets must have NOCSAE approved face guards. Defensive face guards are recommended and endorsed by USFA.

Definitions

6001: Altered bat: When the physical structure of a legal softball bat has been changed.

6002: Appeal: a play in which the umpire cannot make a call on until a player or head coach asks the umpire first.

6003: Base path: the path between the bases. Three feet on both sides of the bag that run parallel from the base pad and centerline. Base runners position also establishes base path.

6004: Base runner: an offensive batter that has just put the ball in play becomes a base runner.

- 6005: Bunt:** when a batter taps the pitched ball and attempts to put the ball in play.
- 6006: Conference:** Anytime a head coach gets permission to suspend play to talk to the players. Only 1 offensive or defensive conference allowed per ½ inning without penalty. On the second defensive conference a pitcher must be replaced. Replaced pitcher must pitch to at least one batter.
- 6007: Stalling:** Umpire has a right to end a conference early if the umpire determines a coach is trying to stall a game. This call will not be questioned or appealed by a coach. Any conference or time out within the last 5 minutes of a timed game will result in the game clock being suspended until play resumes.
- 6008: Leap, Crowhop or Replant:** When the pitcher's pivot foot leaves the ground or is planted more than once during the delivery of a pitch. The foot can drag but cannot be "replanted". Medical officials have deemed replanting hazardous to the pitcher's knees.
- 6009: Dead ball:** When the ball is not in play. Umpire will declare, "Dead ball".
- 6010: Fake tag:** When a defensive player makes the motion of tagging a base runner when there is no actual play being made. Penalty could be ejection of the offending player.
- 6011: Foul tip:** When the batted ball is glanced off the bat and into the catcher's glove.
- 6012: Obstruction:** The act of a defensive team member who hinders or impedes a batter or runner.
- 6013: Hit by pitch:** When the pitched ball hits the batter and the batter is not swinging at the ball or a strike is not called. Dead ball results with the batter advancing to first base.
- 6014: Illegal bats:** A bat that does not meet the requirements of an official bat. Dictated by governing body.

- 6015: Infield fly rule:** A batted pop fly in the infield with 1 or less outs when a base runner occupies at least 1st and 2nd base. When umpire calls infield fly, the batter is out.
- 6016: Interference:** Any time an offensive player deliberately affects the outcome of a play in a physical manner.
- 6017: Live ball:** Any and all times that the ball is in play or until the umpire calls “time” or “dead ball”.

Regulations of the “Playing Field”

These are the basic dimensions for the playing field for each individual age group. The United States Fastpitch Association will use these dimensions for all official events. Maximum fence distances can be further if there is no way possible to bring playing field into legal distance. Temporary fences are recommended to bring fields into legal bounds.

Age Group	Pitching Distance	Base Distance	Distance “feet”
6-Under	Tee Ball	55/60 feet*	120-200 feet
8-Under	35 feet	60 feet	150-225 feet
10-Under	35 feet	60 feet	150-225 feet
12-Under	40 feet	60 feet	180-225 feet
14-Under**	40 feet	60 feet	200-225 feet
16-Under	43 feet	60 feet	200-225 feet
18- Under	43 feet	60 feet	200-225 feet
18-Over	43 feet	60 feet	200-225 feet
High School	43 feet	60 feet	200-225 feet

*Distance based upon availability of playing field

**Local tournaments may elect to play 14U at the 43’ pitching distance. In 2010, all State and National events will be at 40’ pitching distance.

- 7001: There will be a 16-foot diameter circle drawn evenly around the pitching rubber.**
- 7002: The batter’s box will be to the left and to the right of the plate. They will be 3 feet wide and 7 feet long. Four feet toward the pitching rubber from the center of the plate.**

7003: Base lines will extend out 3 feet on both sides of the base parallel to the centerline. (Total of 6 feet wide).

7004: Coaching boxes and on-deck batter's boxes are required.

Umpires Rights and Responsibilities

These are the standard guidelines adapted by the United States Fastpitch Association that governs the rights and responsibilities of the umpires.

8001: The umpire is responsible to keep control of the game.

8002: The umpire has the right to eject any player, coach, or fan for any unsportsmanlike behavior.

8003: Any judgment call that the umpire makes cannot be protested.

8004: Any call made that may be a misinterpretation of the rules can be protested.

8005: A head coach can appeal to the plate umpire in the case of a batter on whether or not a check swing was checked or not. (The field umpire might have a better view). The plate umpire does not have to grant the appeal.

8006: The umpire can suspend play for any reason: Acts of nature, unruly conduct, etc.

8007: It is everyones responsibility to ensure sportsmanship in all events. An unruly fan may place the entire team in jeopardy of ejection or possible forfeit.

Tournament and League Play Guidelines

These are the guidelines adapted by the United States Fastpitch Association for running leagues and tournaments. Local directors may make modifications to accommodate local needs.

9001: League play Guidelines:

1. Teams should be picked in a manner to ensure parity in the league. There is nothing worse than having a stacked team among a group of inexperienced teams. League parity assures better games and a better chance of fair play.
2. At the end of the season, all-star teams can be picked and they should represent the best players that each individual team has to offer.
3. Local all-star tournaments should be rotated between the local area parks on a year-to-year basis.
4. A mid-season tournament is always a good way to raise money for local leagues. The tournament should consist of all league teams within the area.
5. Fundamentals should be taught to the players at all age groups and divisions. Clinics should be arranged for all new coaches.
6. Sportsmanship and fair play should be stressed to all players and coaches.
7. Sponsors should be appropriate for our youth to be associated with.
8. Coaches should try to keep the game fun. Never degrade or belittle a player. Abusive coaches should be weeded out of all local leagues.

9002: Have Fun! “Competitive Fun”

8-Under (Coach Pitch) Rules

1. 8 runs or 3 outs per ½ inning. Following the 3rd out or 8th run scored, all play is stopped so as to prevent injury.
2. There will be 10 defensive players allowed on the field. There must be no more than 6 infielders. The outfielders must play at least 10 feet beyond the bases.
3. 5 pitches or 3 swings, 5th and consecutive fouls will not be counted against the 5 pitch count.

4. If coach is hit by pitch, dead ball and batter runner gets first; no one can move up unless forced.
5. The Coach-Pitcher may pitch at any distance inside the 8 ft pitching circle and within the boundaries of the 24 inch pitching rubber. To clarify, the Coach-Pitcher must be touching or be directly in front of the pitching rubber and use a straight ahead pitching approach. Coach-Pitchers may not pitch from either side of the pitching rubber so as to gain the advantage of a directional hit.

Penalty: If at any time prior to release of the ball, the Coach-Pitcher steps outside of the pitching circle or is outside the imaginary 24 inch pitching rubber boundaries, a strike will be called on the batter.

6. While the ball is in play, all runners are free to advance at their own risk. Play is stopped on defense by stopping the lead runner. Once the lead runner has been stopped, the ball is no longer in play, the ball is thrown to the pitcher's circle and no runner may advance.

Example #1: Runner "A" is at 2nd base when the batter (Runner "B") hits the ball. Runner "A" then runs and reaches third base safely, while the ball is fielded and is thrown to the 3rd baseman that now possesses the ball and is capable of tagging Runner "A" out if she was to attempt to advance. The Umpire declares play stopped. The ball is then thrown to the pitching circle and Runner "B" is halted at 1st base.

Example #2: Using the same scenario as Example #1, Runner "A" is at 2nd base when the batter (Runner "B") hits the ball. Runner "A" however is tagged out prior to reaching 3rd base. In this scenario, the ball is not dead, but rather Runner "B" would now become the lead runner and may continue to advance at her own risk until she is declared out or her progress is stopped by the defense, resulting in the umpire stopping play and the ball being thrown to the pitching circle.

7. Balls must be approved. (COR 0.47-11 inch. Optic yellow)
8. Two coaches can stand in the outfield in fouled ball area only, one on each side. (left side and right side)

9. Girls can leave the base when the coach releases the pitch.
10. Run rule is 12 runs after 3rd inning, 10 after 4th inning, and 8 after 5th inning.
11. Unlimited amount of players on roster.
12. Can bat up to 13 players. Lineup may consist of 10 players with up to 3 EP's.
13. Dead ball if Pitcher-Coach is hit by pitch or interferes with play.
14. No stealing, Bunting or Slapping.
15. There will be no "Infield Fly Rule" for 8-Under.

10-Under Special Rules

1. A USFA stamped (Baden) 11" diameter game ball or the equivalent must be used in all USFA sanctioned events.
2. Pitchers will pitch from 35 feet.
3. 10-Under teams will play by the same rules as the older age divisions, with the only exceptions being the ball size and pitching distance.

High School Division Special Rules

1. High school group is a combined age group of 16u and 18u.

USFA Sportsmanship Guidelines

- 1.** If a player gets hurt (especially a head injury), “Dead Ball” will be called by the umpire. Safety is taken very seriously and should be monitored by all coaches and umpires.
- 2.** Unsportsmanlike behavior by a player, coach or fan is an ejectable offense.
- 3.** Umpires should be fair, impartial, use good judgment and never speak rudely or out of turn to a player, coach or fan. An umpire puts a human element into the game. They are subject to making errors the same as coaches and players are subject to making mistakes. In the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship we will not allow anyone to show disrespect towards them because of their decisions. USFA will do their part by pursuing the best decision makers to call USFA events.
- 4.** Coaches will follow the rules of sportsmanship, never stall a game, be a graceful winner and loser, and never speak rudely or out of turn to a player, coach, fan or umpire. Coaches are also responsible for the sportsmanship of their own players and fans. Coaches should not tolerate unsportsmanlike conduct from their own players or fans.
- 5.** Most importantly, our motto is COMPETITIVE FUN. It is everyone’s responsibility to keep the game FUN. It is a game and games are supposed to be fun. Play hard, coach hard, and umpire hard. Spectators should enjoy the game and support their team when they are playing both good and bad. Umpires are human and bad calls can happen. This is a part of the game now and forever. Accept it and have fun.

USFA National Tournament Play Guidelines

Tournament Qualification:

5. Teams must be USFA Sanctioned.
6. Must do at least one of the following:
 - a. Receive a direct berth at a National Invitational Tournament.
 - b. Attend at least 1 State Qualifier or NIT.
 - c. Attend at least 1 State Qualifier and have accumulated at least 100 points.
7. Attend the USFA State Tournament **in your home state** or a Regional Qualifier Tournament for your area.
8. Receive an at-large berth if no USFA events are available within 200 miles of your team's home. (Contact the Regional or National Office for details)

NOTE: Teams that have received a berth to a "A" classification National event in USFA or another organization must play in the USFA "A" World Series. Furthermore, any team that has been classified as an "A" team or participates in an "A" State Tournament hosted by USFA or another organization may be required to play in the USFA "A" World Series.

Tournament Play:

1. Time Limit is 1 hour 15 minutes (finish the inning) for pool games. Pool games can end in a tie. All elimination games will be no new inning after 1 hour 15 minutes. International Tie Breaker is in effect after time has expired or number of innings has been played. Championship games will be 7 innings for 12-U, 14-U, 16-U and 18-U. Championship games will be 6 innings for 6-U, 8-U and 10-U. International Tie Breaker will be used at expiration of time limit for bracket games that are at a tie. International Tie Breaker will be used for Championship games after the official number of innings has been played.
2. Run rules will be in effect for all Pool, Bracket and Championship Games. Run rules are: 12 runs after 3, 10 runs after 4, and 8 runs after 5. Run rules are in effect for all games, including championship games.
3. There will be no warm-ups on the field prior to game.

4. The USFA stamped (Baden) game ball will be the only ball used in USFA National events.
9. Home team will be decided by coin toss. Home team will be official scorekeeper.
10. Game schedule may be altered for inclement weather. Games may be cancelled or rescheduled accordingly. It is up to the individual team to check current posted schedules.
11. Pool games cancelled due to inclement weather may not be made up.
12. Coaches must check their team in at the Team Managers/Coaches meeting (time and location to be announced).
13. Hydration, Hydration, Hydration!! Keep an eye on your girls. If there is any question about a girl's health on the field, please tell the umpire to stop the game so we can assure the well being of the girls. Also, coaches need to keep an eye on the umpires. Players need to keep an eye on the coaches. Keep your coaches hydrated. We want everyone to stay healthy and have FUN!! Wear your SUNSCREEN; you will be glad that you did!

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