



**ESTABLISHED SEPTEMBER 26, 2002**

**2017**  
**YOUTH FAST PITCH**  
**RULE BOOK**



# National Office

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## Section 01 – Guidelines and Procedures

**Purpose:** (1) To seek the best competition, sportsmanship and brotherhood of coaches, players, fans and spectators alike regardless of race, religion, sex, or age. (2) To do our best in classifying teams to where they can be competitive and enjoy the game of Softball. No Team enjoys being humiliated and being in a game where they are out classed. Our number one goal is to classify teams from Top traveling teams to Recreational teams in a group where each team is playing in a classification where they belong. (3) To work with any group, league, or association that is willing to follow our guidelines and has the same interest in Softball as we do and promotes the game of Softball. (4) To support and encourage any Community, County, State, or Country in an effort to spread Softball and get more people of all ages, (ESPECIALLY OUR YOUTH), religion, sex, or race involved.

**Directors:** All G.S.A. Directors will be required to sign a two year contract and at which time that two year contract will expire, the Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director will make a decision on renewing that contract at that time. However certain circumstances listed below could result in the termination of a G.S.A. Director. All GSA Directors are expected to wear GSA attire. This can be purchased at <http://gsaofficials.com> or from <http://gsasports.gbstores.com>

- (1) Failure to furnish G.S.A. Officers with Tournament Reports, League Reports, Sanction Reports and fees in a timely manner. All of these are expected to be reported no later than 10 days from time of event.
- (2) Involvement of another Tournament, League, or event not sanctioned by G.S.A.
- (3) Any act or involvement that discredits G.S.A. or discredits advancement, growth, reputation or well being of G.S.A. or Softball in general.
- (4) On the other side in return of doing a good job as a Director G.S.A. will do everything possible in helping any Director in their advancement in Softball.

**Rule Interpretations:** Basic terms used in Softball such as batter, fielder, base runner, infield fly and etc. will be basically 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 G.S.A. to inform the Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director of their decision and a side letter will be generated to inform teams of what the ruling will be in the future should that circumstance arise again.

**Returned Check Policy:** (1) ANY returned check will incur an additional fee of \$35. (2) The original promised amount, plus the \$35 fee, MUST be replaced with certified funds, either cash, money order or cashiers check, within 10 days of the issue date of the check. (3) A second returned check will result in ALL future tournaments being on a CASH BASIS ONLY.

**Returned Check Policy:** (1) Refunds/Credit will be calculated according to the number of games guarantee.

**3 Game Guarantee Example – Play 1 game 66% back, 2 games 33% back, 3 games zero back.**  
**4 Game Guarantee Example – Play 1 game 75% back, 2 games 50%, 3 games zero back.**

Thirty minutes of playing time is considered a completed game.

NO CASH REFUNDS – Credit only will be issued towards future tournaments, except in the case of a total rainout. Credits unused by July 31 of each fiscal year will become a cash refund and will be issued by check at the end of the season.

## Section 02 – Protests

### Types of Protests:

- (1) **Misinterpretation of a playing rule:** These must be made before the next pitch or should it be the last play of the game, be made before the umpires leave the field.
- (2) **Ineligible player:** These may be made at any time. A decision will be made as soon as possible. It's not always possible to make a decision on this during the game or even before the Tournament is over. If the team is found guilty, appropriate measures will be taken.

**Protests that won't be considered:** Judgment decisions made by an umpire such as safe, out, balls, strikes, fair or foul.

**Protests Fees:** (1) Any team wishing to protest a game shall pay half the entry fee of that particular Tournament. League Teams shall pay \$180. Teams who win the protest will receive the money back.

**Protest Procedure:** (1) 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. Umpire shall also notify the League or Tournament Director immediately.

**Written Protest:** (A) In the event the situation cannot be resolved by a League or Tournament Director a written protest should be filled out and sent in to the Area 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 for getting in touch with you.

**Protest Decisions:** (1) Protest decisions will be looked at closely and handled in the best interest of Softball and the Team or Teams involved. (2) Ineligibility protest in cases where the Team or player is found to be ineligible will be handled with the team found guilty forfeiting all games played and dropped to bottom of Rankings and may risk being banned from G.S.A. for the remainder of the year. Coaches are required to have birth certificates for all players with them at each Tournament. Players who are 15 and over and have a valid Driver's license may use a driver's license in place of a birth certificate.

## Section 03 – Umpires

**Umpire Responsibilities:** One or more umpires will be used in any G.S.A. sanctioned League or Tournament. They shall be responsible for the conduct of the game and be responsible for a decision of playing conditions on the field once the game begins or before the start of the game. They will apply these rules and maintain order and discipline on the playing field during the game.

**Uniform:** Umpires shall wear approved G.S.A. umpire attire. This can be purchased at <http://gsaofficials.com>

**Decisions:** No umpire shall have the authority to question decisions made by another umpire. However umpires may consult and are encouraged to consult with each other over a questionable call. But the final decision is made by the umpire who originally made the call.

**Change of Umpires:** Teams may not request a change of umpires during or before a game. Umpires will only be changed in the event of illness or an emergency.

## Section 04 – Equipment

- (1) **Bats:** G.S.A. and our Advisory Board will make decisions and update on our website which bats are legal.

(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.
- (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 or donuts will be allowed in the on-deck circle but must be removed from the field of play if not in use.
- (2) Official Softball: Will be a yellow optic softball core 44 minimum to core 47 maximum. No more than 375 Compression.
- (3) Gloves: May be worn by any fielder. MITTS may also be used by any fielder.
- (4) Uniforms: All players should wear uniforms that are alike in the same color.
- (A) Headwear: Caps, Visors, or headbands are optional. But if worn should be alike in color and with bill to the front.
- (B) Numbers should be worn on the uniform.
- (C) Pants/Shorts: Pants or shorts may be worn but should be alike in color.
- D) Shoes: Shoes must be worn by all players. Metal cleats may be worn by age groups 14U and older but the cleats must be no longer than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch.
- (E) Jewelry: No exposed jewelry may be worn that in the umpire's judgment could be dangerous to a player/players.
- (F) Casts: Cast 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.
- (G) G.S.A. reserves the right to make changes or withdraw any approval or disapproval of any equipment at any time should in G.S.A.'s determination change the game, affect the safety of participants or spectators, or creates a players performance to be more a product of the equipment rather than their individual skill.

## Section 05 – Players and Substitutes

- (1) Line-up cards are to be completed and submitted to the official scorekeeper and umpire before the start of the game. Line-ups need to at least include last names and jersey numbers. In the event a number is listed wrong, correct the mistake and continue with the game as long as the name is correct.
- (2) Teams may start with 8 players if they do not have everyone there, providing 2 of those players are the pitcher and catcher.
- (3) Teams will be allowed to substitute all players in and out of the entire game except for the base burner (BB). A substitute may come in for a starter, then the starter back in for the substitute, and substitute back in for starter and so forth and so on. Players may play anywhere defensively during the game. Once a substitute has been entered into the batting order, they may not bat again in a different position in the batting order (AND THE ORIGINAL STARTER MUST BAT IN THAT SAME POSITION IF RE-ENTERED).
- (4) Teams may start with 8 to 12 players on the line-up card. Teams may drop down one player and not be penalized. If you drop down one player, that spot in the batting order will just be skipped over. However if you drop down 2 players, then an out will be recorded every time that spot comes up in the batting order. The defensive team in that situation will be allowed to walk a player to get to that out. The minimum number of players a team will

be allowed to drop down to is 8. Any less than 8 and that team must forfeit. Batting orders may consist of up to 9 defensive players, 2 (EH) Extra Hitters, and 1 (BB) for 11U through 19 Over. Batting orders for 6U, 8U and the 10U Copper Classification may consist of up to 10 defensive players, 2 (EH) Extra Hitters, and 1 (BB). Note: 6 Under through 8 Under may have 10 defensive players, so they may start with 8 to 13 players. Loss of the (BB) from your lineup does NOT count as dropping one player.

- (5) Teams may have up to three additional players. Teams may have up to two players known as an (EH) Extra Hitter. If used they must be listed on the line-up. And teams may have one player known as (BB) Base Burner. If used the (BB) must be listed on the line-up. Please note if you choose to use a (BB) you can NOT substitute for a (BB). The (EH), (EH'S) will be on your lineup as hitters and may be substituted in a defensive position only as long as the batting order stays the same. Your (EH), (EH'S) may also be used as substitute runners at any time and for as many times as needed per inning. The (BB) may also be used as a substitute runner at any time and for as many times as needed per inning. The (BB) may also be substituted into the game, however if you enter your (BB) into the game in a defensive or offensive position you will not have a (BB) for the remainder of the game. Once your (BB) has been listed on your lineup as your (BB) no other player during that game shall be allowed to take the place of the (BB). One thing to keep in mind is players can be swapped defensively the entire game. Starting players and substitutes have to remain in the same batting order the entire game. In other words whatever spot in the batting order that a substitute is inserted into that one spot is the only spot where the original starter and substitute can occupy. To be consistent with Free substitution rules, an EH may be substituted in and out with no penalty. This means if an EH is on base when her at bat comes up, she may be replaced with a BB or another EH . An EH on base can also be replaced with the original batter/runner or a sub who has not entered the game in the batting lineup. EH(s) may start the game on defense with no penalty.
- (6) Teams will be allowed 21 players on their roster. Teams will be allowed to make changes to that roster up until 2 weeks before the State Tournament. At which time the last official roster we have on file for your team will become your team's official frozen roster. Please keep that in mind when it gets close to 2 weeks before the State Tournament. Once the roster is frozen teams will be allowed to add 2 players. You may drop as many as you like but can only add 2. Unusual circumstances may be looked at by the G.S.A. National Office or by the Advisory board. The Board and Directors will be looking all thru the year and may move teams either up or down in classification during the year in order to have the best competition possible. Once rosters are frozen no team will be moved in classification. Teams that have not played at least two GSA Tournaments at the two week period prior to the State Tournament, Region Tournament or World Tournament will not be allowed to participate in these tournaments. All Star teams who have not played at least one GSA Tournament prior to the All-Star State Tournament will not be allowed to play in our All-Star State Tournament. Please keep this in mind because there will not be any exceptions. Any player that plays in our State, Region or World Tournament has to have at least played in 2 G.S.A. Tournaments with that team during the year.
- (7) All teams must be able to present a Sanctioned G.S.A. Director with either a birth certificate or valid Driver's License for proof of player's age. Should a team not be able to do this at the tournament the Tournament Director will have the right to require any information needed from players. The game will not continue until which time the coach can provide birth certificates or valid driver's license. After investigation should that Team be found to have illegal players that Team shall be banned for the remainder of the year. After investigation and the team is found to be legal and asked for birth certificates or valid driver's license again at any time during the year and can't provide them at the Tournament again this team will forfeit all games and fees for that Tournament. G.S.A. Directors may randomly ask for birth certificates or valid driver's license without a request from another team. Your responsibility as a coach is to have all documents with you at all times.
- (8) A player may be released from a frozen team's roster should a parent or legal guardian request a release using the approved G.S.A. Youth release form which may be found at the National website at <http://gsateams.com> The player may be released immediately upon the coach's approval. If the coach does not approve the release the player will be released once the approved release form has been received by the State Director. Players may only be released in this manner one time during the year.
- (9) Players may advance once the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- (10) An ejected player may remain in the dugout unless there are further problems in which case the Coach or parent will be asked to leave the playing field and take the player with them. Refusal to do this may also result

in that team forfeiting the game. An ejected coach, parent, or spectator must leave the field and remain out of sight of the umpires.

- (11) **Blood Rule:** A player, coach, manager, or umpire who is bleeding or who has blood on their uniform shall leave the playing field until appropriate treatment can be administered. If a team has a substitute they must be placed in the game and continue the game. If the team has no substitute the player may return, if in the umpire's judgment the problem is taken care of in a reasonable amount of time. Uniform rules will be waived in the case the player has to change.

## Section 06 – Playing Field

- (1) **Catchers Box:** Is the area designated by lines which are considered within the box. The catcher's body and equipment are considered inside the box unless touching the ground outside the box. The catcher must remain inside the box unless a pitched ball is batted, touches the ground or plate, or passes the plate.
- (2) **Ground Rules:** There may be special rules set aside by different parks, Leagues, or Directors when there are special circumstances or obstructions.
- (3) **The Double base** is optional for first base. If the double base is used the runner may touch the colored, or part of the bag in foul territory. If an errant throw pulls the defensive player into the colored bag area, a defensive player may catch the ball, standing on the colored bag and it will be an out if it's called an out by the Umpire. The batter-runner can touch the white bag on an out or safe call. After running past the bag the batter-runner can come back and stand on either bag without the risk of being called out.

## Section 07 – The Game

- (1) **Balls and Strikes:** G.S.A. will have four (4) balls and three (3) strikes. You walk on the Fourth (4) ball and strike out on the Third (3) strike.
- (2) Teams that intend on intentionally walking a batter must pitch a complete at bat.
- (3) **Home Team:** The designated home team shall bat last in the inning. In Tournament play the umpire shall flip a coin twice. The umpire shall designate one team as heads and one as tails to see who makes the call. Then he will flip the coin again to see which team is home team.
- (5) **Fitness of the ground:** The fitness of the ground shall be decided by the home plate umpire for Tournaments and possibly other officials during league play.
- (6) **Time:** (A) Time may be called at any time at the umpire's discretion. (B) Time will be called immediately by an umpire when an injury occurs that is bad enough in an umpire's judgment to halt play. (C) The ball is live and in play once the pitcher toes the rubber.
- (7) **Regulation Game:** (A) A regulation game consists of seven innings. The game shall be called if and when any run rules come into effect or if the home team scores more runs in six and one half innings and/or before the third out of the seventh inning. (B) In the event of inclement weather G.S.A. officials will have the right to shorten the game in an effort to get all games in. (C) A shortened game will be considered regulation if four or more innings have been played, or if the home team scores more runs in three and one half innings or more.
- (8) **Extra Innings / Tie Breaker:** Should the score be tied after seven innings or however many innings a complete game is according to time limit. To start the next inning the visiting team shall place their last two batters at second and third. With the last batter placed on second base and the next to last batter placed on third. The home team will also do this when their turn at bat comes up and both teams will continue this until the game has been won. Teams will be allowed to substitute there (EH), (EH'S), in extra innings just as you can in regular play.

- (9) **Forfeited Games:** An umpire may forfeit a game in favor of a team not at fault in the following cases. (A) If an umpire is physically attacked by any team member or spectator. (B) If a team fails to appear on the field or is already on the field and refuses to begin a scheduled game. (C) If after a warning from the umpire a team willfully violates any of the rules. (D) If one team refuses to continue play after the game has begun. (E) If an ejected player, coach, spectator or manager does not leave playing field or follow umpire's directions within a reasonable amount of time in umpire's judgment. (F) In the case of a player being ejected and that team does not have enough remaining players to continue the game. (G) An umpire or Tournament Director may forfeit a game because of unsportsmanlike conduct or making a mockery of the game. (H) If necessary Tournament directors may allow up to 15 minutes before declaring a forfeit during the first completed round of play. This 15 minute delay will be allotted to the adjusted game time. But after the first round of play, all teams are expected to be on time for their next scheduled games. (I) The score of a forfeited game shall be 1-0 in favor of the Team not at fault. The reason for 1-0 is so it does not adversely affect the rankings.
- (10) **Charged Conference:** (A) **Offensive conference:** There will be only one charged conference between coach/manager and or bench coaches with player per inning. No conferences will be allowed after that. (B) **Defensive conference:** There will only be three charged conferences between coach/manager and or bench coaches with any defensive player in the game. No conferences will be allowed after that. (C) All offensive or defensive conferences should be brief and broken up by the umpire if not in a reasonable amount of time in the judgment of the umpire. No conferences results in the removal of the pitcher.
- (11) **Infield Fly:** An infield fly is a fair ball that is popped up on the infield which in an umpire's judgment may be easily caught by an infielder. This applies when there are runners on either first and second, or first, second, and third with less than two outs. When this happens the umpire shall declare, "INFIELD FLY, BATTER IS OUT, IF FAIR". Once the ball is touched by an infielder the ball is live and runners may advance at their own risk. Should the ball be foul and not caught by a player it will only be a foul ball and a strike on the batter.
- (12) A run shall not be scored if the third out of an inning is the result of any of the following.
- (A) The batter being put out before legally touching first base.
  - (B) A base runner being forced out due to the batter becoming a base-runner.
  - (C) A base-runner leaving the base before a pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand in fast pitch or hits the ground or catcher's glove in slow pitch.
  - (D) An appeal play at any base on the runner for the third out of the inning.
- (13) Run rule shall be 10 runs after 3 innings, 8 runs after 4 innings, and 6 runs after 5 innings.

## Section 08 – Pitching Regulations

- (1) When starting the game and at each half inning a pitcher will be allowed 5 warm-up pitches or 2 minutes whichever comes first. A new pitcher coming in relief in the middle of an inning will be allowed 5 warm-up pitches.
- (2) **No Pitch:** Will be declared when:
- (A) The pitcher pitches during suspension of play.
  - (B) A runner is called out for leaving a base too early.
  - (C) Pitcher pitches before a runner gets back to a base after a foul ball.
  - (D) The ball slips out of the pitcher's hand during wind-up.

- (3) Questioning of balls and strikes will not be tolerated in G.S.A. play. One warning will be given per team. The next time the offending player or member of that team will be ejected. Should the umpire not know who was arguing the umpire shall have the right to eject any player or member of the team they choose.

## Section 09 – Batting

- (1) Batting out of order: **Batting out of order is an appeal play which needs to be made by the defensive team. The defensive team forfeits its right to appeal when one legal or illegal pitch has been made to the following batter.**
- (3) Penalties for batting out of order: **Are as follows:**
- (A) **If an incorrect batter is discovered before the batter completes the turn at bat the correct batter takes their place assuming any balls and/or strikes.**
  - (B) **If the mistake is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed the turn at bat before a legal or illegal pitch has been made to a succeeding batter the batter that should have batted is called out. If any runs scored they will not be counted. All base runners, if any had advanced, must return to the base occupied at the time the incorrect batter was batting. However, any outs that were made during the incorrect at bat will stand. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the batter called out for not batting.**
  - (C) **If the mistake is not discovered until the next legal or illegal pitch has been made to the next batter the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is then legal. All bases advanced or runs scored will count and the next batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter who has just finished batting. 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 their turn comes up again in the regular line-up.**
- (4) Batting Position: **Is as follows:**
- (A) **The batter must have both feet within the lines of the batter's box prior to the start of the pitch. The batter may touch the lines but no part of a foot may be outside the lines prior to the pitch.**
  - (B) **The batter must take a position inside the batter's box within 10 seconds after the umpire announces "PLAY BALL". If not the umpire may call a strike on the batter. No pitch has to be thrown and the ball is dead.**
  - (C) **The batter shall not step directly in front of the catcher while pitcher is in position to pitch. If so the ball is dead, batter is out and runners may not advance.**
  - (D) **Batter must request time from the home plate umpire prior to stepping out of the batter's box. It's up to the umpire as to whether time is granted or not.**
- (5) Batters will be called out: **In circumstances as follows:**
- (A) **If any part of a batter's foot is touching home plate at the time the ball is struck by the bat.**
  - (B) **If a batter swings at a ball a second time in fair or foul territory.**
  - (C) **When the batter hits a line drive that an infielder catches and intentionally drops in an umpire's judgment. In which case the ball is dead and all runners return to the base occupied at the time of pitch.**
  - (D) **Batter shall not hinder the catcher from catching or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter's box or intentionally hinder the catcher while standing inside the batter's box. Result is ball is dead, batter is out and all runners return to whatever base was occupied at the time.**

**(E) A batter shall not wave the bat or make any motion with an obvious intention of interfering with the catcher. Batter will be warned the first time and called out the second time. The ball will be declared dead and no runners may advance.**

(F) When a batter is hit by a fair batted ball while outside the batter's box and advancing.

## Section 10 – Batter - Runner

- (1) The batter becomes a batter-runner after finishing an at bat but has not yet been put out or touched first base.
- (A) As soon as the batter legally hits a fair ball.
  - (B) When four balls have been called by the umpire. When this happens the ball is live and the batter-runner is awarded first base.
  - (C) When the catcher obstructs, hinders or prevents the batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball. In this case the ball is dead and the batter-runner is awarded first base.
- (2) Batter-Runner is out: As follows:
- (A) When the batter-runner runs outside the three foot lane and interferes with the fielder taking the throw.
  - (B) When the batter-runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a ball, interferes with a fielder attempting to throw a ball, interferes with a thrown ball, or makes contact with a fair batted ball before reaching first base. If, in the umpire's judgment, this interference is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play. The runner causing the interference will be called out as well as the preceding runner involved in the potential double play.
  - (C) When the batter-runner moves backwards toward home plate to avoid a tag by a fielder on intentionally gives up his right to first base by entering foul territory. In this case the ball is dead and runner/runners must return to the last legally touched base at the time the call was made.
  - (D) When the immediate preceding runner who has not yet been put out intentionally interferes with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or throw a ball in an attempt to complete the play.
- (3) Touching bases in legal order:
- (A) When a runner must return to a base while the ball is in play the runner must re-touch any bases touched previously in reverse order.
  - (B) A runner shall not run the bases in reverse order to confuse fielders or make a mockery of the game. Should this happen the ball is dead and the runner is out.
  - (C) Two runners may not occupy the same base at the same time. The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to the base unless forced to advance. The other runner may be put out by being touched with the ball.
  - (D) Failure of a preceding runner to touch a base or to legally tag up on a caught fly ball and who is declared out, does not affect the status of a succeeding runner who touches the base/bases in order. If the failure to touch a base in regular order or to legally tag up on a caught fly ball is the third out of an inning no succeeding runner may score a run.
  - (E) No runner may return to touch a missed base or one that the runner had left too soon after a following runner has scored or once that runner leaves the field of play.
  - (F) When a runner leaves a base too soon on a caught fly ball the base must be retouched before advancing to other bases.

- (4) Runners must return to their base under the following circumstances:
- (A) When a batted ball is declared foul.
  - (B) When an illegally batted ball is declared by the umpire.
  - (C) When a batter or batter-runner or runner is called out for interference. Each other runner shall return to the last base which in the umpire's judgment was legally touched at the time of interference.
  - (D) Runners must immediately return to their base or continue to the next base after each pitched ball is returned to the pitcher and the pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitcher's circle. Players will not be allowed to be off base and play cat and mouse ("LOOK BACK RULE") with the pitcher having possession of the ball in the pitcher's circle. Should this happen, the player will be called out for delaying the game.
- (5) Runners will be declared out in the following cases:
- (A) When a runner runs out of the base path to avoid a tag. The base path is an imaginary line three feet on either side of a direct line between a base and the runner's position at the time a defensive player is attempting to make the tag.
  - (B) When the ball is in play and the runner is not in contact with the base and is legally touched with the ball in the hand/hands of the fielder.
  - (C) When on a force play a fielder contacts the base while holding the ball, touches the ball to the base or tags the runner before reaching the base.
  - (D) When the runner fails to return to touch the base previously occupied or missed and is properly appealed.
  - (E) When a runner physically passes the lead runner before the lead runner has been put out.
  - (F) When the runner leaves the base to advance to another base before a caught fly has been touched by a fielder, providing the ball is returned to the base and is appealed properly.
  - (G) When a runner is not in contact with a base until the pitcher releases the ball.
  - (H) When a runner fails to touch a base in order and the ball is returned to that base and is appealed properly.
  - (I) When the batter-runner overruns first base, attempts to run to second and is tagged while off base.
  - (J) While running or sliding for home plate, the runner fails to touch home plate, makes no attempt to return to it, and a fielder while touching home plate appeals properly to the umpire. Note: Once a player has entered the dugout area that player has forfeited their right to go back and re-tag a base or home plate.
  - (K) When a runner interferes with a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball, interferes with a fielder attempting to make a throw or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in an umpire's judgment, is an obvious attempt to break up a double play and occurs before the runner is put out the immediate succeeding runner will also be called out. If a ball ricochets off of one defensive player and another player has an opportunity to make an out the runner will also be called out if they interfere with the second player.

- (L) When a runner is struck by a fair untouched batted fair ball while not in contact with a base.
- (M) When a runner leaves a base to advance to the next base before a fly ball has been touched or touches some object provided that if the ball is caught and held on the base or a fielder touches the runner with the ball before the runner returns to retouch the original base.
- (N) When a base runner jumps over a defensive player waiting to tag the runner out. If the feet go over waist high or if the defensive player is kneeling and the base runners feet go above the head of the defensive player the base runner is not only out but may be ejected from the game. If, in an umpire's judgment, it all happened in the spur of the moment and was not intentional the runner will just be called out.
- (O) Should a runner intentionally kick the ball the runner shall be called out and ejected. If, in an umpire's judgment, it was not intentional the runner will just be called out.
- (P) When a batter-runner fails to touch a base or bases in order while the ball is in play and the ball is legally held on the missed base or the runner is touched with the ball while off base.
- (Q) When anyone physically assists a runner while the ball is in play. Should this happen before a ball is caught, regardless of fair or foul, a delayed dead ball will be called and runner assisting the other runner will be called out. Should it be a coach or anyone else assisting a runner that runner shall be called out. Any other runners will return to the last base touched when the call was made. If it's a fly ball and not caught and foul after the runner has been called out all other runners shall return to their original base and a strike called on the batter for a foul ball.
- (R) When a coach near third base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the third base line while a fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted ball or thrown ball and causes the defensive player to make a throw to home plate. If the coach, in an umpire's judgment, does anything else to cause confusion on the defense, the runner closest to home plate will be called out. Should no runners be on base at the time the batter will be called out. Also the coach shall be warned and should it happen a second time, the same procedure will be followed, with the coach being ejected from the game as well.
- (S) When a defensive player has the ball in hand or glove and the runner remains on their feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player. Should this happen the runner is called out and ejected from the game and all other runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the incident.
- (T) Any vocal interference to a defensive player attempting to complete a play or a vocal act, in an umpire's judgment, that might cause injury. Should this happen the runner closest to home plate will be called out. Should there not be any runners on base the batter will be called out.

## Section 11 – Youth Fast Pitch Program

(G.S.A. accepts no responsibility and disclaims all liability for any bodily injury or property damage to coaches, ball players, fans, or other members of the general public which arise from any G.S.A. sanctioned event or any actions of any kind of any G.S.A. Directors or Umpires whether intentional or by accident. A roster must be filled out and signed in every G.S.A. Tournament or event, and by signing that roster, you are saying you agree to this Statement. All Youth rosters will require parent or legal guardian signature if under age and player's signature if not, and coach's signature.)

- (1) Age cutoff for Youth will be January 1. Whatever age the player is, as of January 1, will be the age classification they are eligible for.
- (2) Players may play up in classification, but may not play down in classification.
- (3) Anytime a player is injured in Youth, in an umpire's judgment, bad enough to stop play, time shall be called immediately.
- (4) In the unfortunate situation where a player should be ejected, an umpire should not say anything to the player, but should call time and talk with the coach and inform the coach of the ejection, and player may remain in the dugout, unless any further complications occur, at which time the umpire should call time again, and inform the coach that he/she needs to go with the player and leave sight of the playing field until which time a parent or legal guardian can accompany that player.
- (5) Catchers must wear an approved mask, protective helmet, chest protector, and shin guards. Any player warming up a pitcher within the confines of the ball park shall wear approved head protection and an approved mask.
- (6) G.S.A. fast pitch will use a 12 inch, core 44 minimum to core 47 maximum optic yellow 375 compression maximum softball for 12 Under and up. 8 Under and 10 Under shall use an 11 inch, core 44 minimum to core 47 maximum optic yellow 375 compression maximum softball.
- (7) Any player batting on deck or on base must wear a helmet. Under no circumstances shall a player remove their helmet until in dugout. Should an umpire detect a runner (including the batter-runner deliberately removing their batting helmet during playing action, a dead ball will be called, the player will be called out, and if a force play was in order at the time of the pitched ball, the runner closest to home plate will also be called out, with no runners returning to the base occupied at the time of the pitch. No runner shall score a run when a batter-runner or runner has been declared the third out of an inning for deliberately removing their batting helmet. Chin straps are also recommended.
- (8) Infield Fly begins in 12 Under.
- (9) Run rules shall be 10 runs after 3 innings, 8 runs after 4 innings, and 6 runs after 5 innings.
- (10) GSA will have 6 Under, 8 Under, 10 Under, 12 Under, 14 Under, 16 Under, 18 Under, and 19 Over age groups, with all having A- Gold, A - Silver, B - Gold, B - Silver, B - Bronze, and B - Copper Divisions.
- (11) Any base runner may advance to another base once the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- (12) No players will be allowed to play in two age divisions in the same Tournament. A player may play in two age divisions, just not in the same Tournament.
- (13) The GSA season begins on August 1 and ends on July 31.
- (14) Definitions:
  - (A) 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.

- (B) **Appeal Play**: An appeal must be made before the next legal pitch, or before all defensive players have left fair territory and are 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 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 umpire's call to make. If not, the home plate umpire shall point to the field umpire to make the call.
- (C) **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.
- (D) **Base Path**: A direct line between bases and runners at the time a defensive player is attempting (or about to attempt) to tag a runner.
- (E) **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.
- (F) **Batter hit by pitch**: A legally or illegally pitched ball that hits the batter's body or clothing, without the batter attempting to swing at the pitch. The umpire shall award first base to the batter struck by the pitch. All runners forced to advance shall advance one base. However, if in an umpire's judgment, a batter makes no attempt to avoid getting hit by the pitch, or the umpire calls the pitch a strike, the batter getting struck by pitch will be disregarded. The ball is dead and the pitch is either called a strike or ball.
- (G) **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.
- (H) **Batter-Runner**: A player who has finished their turn at bat, but has not been put out or touched first base.
- (I) **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 player's defensive position, and their jersey number. If used, the (EH) or (EH'S), and (BB) must be listed.
- (J) **Blocked ball**: A live ball that is touched, stopped, blocked, or handled by a person not involved in the game. A ball which touches any object that is not considered part of the official equipment or playing area. A blocked ball is not called when a live ball strikes a base coach unintentionally or umpire unintentionally. The ball will be considered live. Should any part of offensive equipment cause a blocked ball, all runners must return to the last base touched when the ball became blocked. The ball is dead.
- (K) **Blood Rule**: Applies to a player, coach, or umpire who is bleeding or has blood on his uniform and treatment is required.
- (L) **Bunt**: Is a fair ball in which the batter does not take a full swing to hit the ball, but instead holds the bat in such a manner as to tap the ball into fair or foul play. An attempted bunt that rolls foul on the last strike is an out.
- (M) **Catcher's Box**: Is the area designated by lines which are considered within the box. The catcher's body and equipment are considered inside the box unless touching the ground outside the box. The catcher must remain inside the box until a pitched ball is batted, touches the ground or plate, or passes the plate.
- (N) **Crow Hop**: Prior to releasing the ball, the pitcher replants the pivot foot and pushes off from a spot other than the pitcher's rubber. In the umpire's judgment, should this happen, a dead ball shall be called. A ball will be awarded to the batter and all runners will advance one base.
- (O) **Dead Ball**: Happens when ball is not in play, and not considered in play again until the pitcher has the ball in their possession and the umpire has announced "PLAY BALL".

- (P) **Ejection:** Happens due to an incident which requires that a player, coach, manager, or fan be removed from the game. In the umpire's judgment it may result in that person being asked to leave the park, or out of sight. Any player who has been ejected and shows back up in the game, will constitute a forfeit.
- (Q) **Illegally Batted Ball:** Occurs when a batter's entire foot is completely out of the batter's box, on the ground, when they hit the ball fair or foul, when any part of the batter's foot is touching home plate when the ball is hit, when the batter hits the ball with an illegal bat. Should any of these happen, the ball is dead and batter is called out, and any runners return to their original base.
- (R) **Interference:** Is the act of an offensive player or team member which impedes or confuses a defensive player while attempting to make a play. If this happens, in an umpire's judgment, vocal interference may be called.
- (S) **Sacrifice:** Occurs when, with no more than one out, a bunt or fly ball enables a runner to score. In either case the batter-runner would be put out before reaching first base, or would have been put out if the hit would have been fielded without an error.
- (T) **Strike Zone:** The strike zone is that space over any part of home plate which is between the batters armpits and the batters knees, when a natural batting stance is assumed.
- (U) **Squeeze:** Is a play in which the runner advances towards home plate from third base following the release of a pitched ball. The batter bunts the ball, permitting the runner to score.
- (15) **Pitching Regulations:**
- (A) Prior to starting the pitch, the pitcher must take a position in which both feet are in contact with the pitching rubber.
- (B) The pitcher shall take, or simulate taking, a signal from the catcher. If not it will be called an illegal pitch.
- (C) The pitcher, before pitching and after getting the signal from the catcher, must take a position with the shoulders in line with first and third base, with the ball in both hands.
- (D) After receiving the ball from the catcher, the pitcher must deliver the ball towards home plate in not less than two seconds or more than 10 seconds. Once the pitcher has taken a position on the rubber a noticeable pause must be made. The pivot foot must remain in contact with, or push off and drag away from, the pitching rubber, prior to the front foot touching the ground. The pivot foot must remain in contact with either the pitching rubber or the ground.
- (E) The pitcher will not be considered to be in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- (F) The pitching position may not be assumed by the pitcher on or near the pitching rubber without having possession of the ball. Should this occur it will be called an illegal pitch.
- (G) The pitch starts when the pitcher separates one of the hands from the ball after the hands are together.
- (H) After taking the signal, the pitcher may not step backwards with the non-pivot foot. It is not considered a step, if the pitcher slides their foot on the pitching rubber, provided contact with the rubber is maintained. Such techniques as the "crow hop" and "leap" are illegal.
- (I) A legal delivery is one in which the ball is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion, so that the follow through of the hand and wrist and the release of the ball must be forwards, past the straight line of the body, and with the following conditions.
- (1) A rocker action is not used, meaning, after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, the pitcher removes one hand from the ball, takes a backward and forward swing, and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body.

- (2) No wind up is used, such as a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
  - (3) There is to be no more than one revolution of the arm in the windmill pitch. The pitching arm may be dropped to the side or to the rear before starting the windmill motion. The ball does not have to be released the first time past the hip.
  - (4) The pitcher makes no continuous wind up after taking the forward step, which is simultaneous with the release of the ball.
- (J) While in the pitching position, the pitcher may not deliberately drop, roll, or bounce the ball in order to prevent the batter from striking it.
- (K) During the game, the pitcher may not use tape or any other substance on the ball, pitching hand or fingers. Or should any player apply any foreign substance on the ball. A powdered resin may be used to dry the hand. The wearing of any item on the pitching hand, wrist or arm which may be distracting to the batter will not be allowed.

**NOTE:** Should any of the above under (15) Pitching Regulations occur, it will be declared an illegal pitch. The umpire will call a delayed dead ball, a ball will be awarded to the batter and all base runners advance one base. If the illegal pitch is hit and all runners including the batter-runner advance one base then the play stands. A warning shall be issued to the pitcher and if the pitcher continues to throw illegal pitches the umpire may remove the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game

(L) The umpire shall declare "NO PITCH" when the following occur:

- (1) A pitcher pitches during a suspension of play.
- (2) A runner is declared out for leaving the base before the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- (3) The pitcher pitches before a base-runner has re-touched the base occupied after a foul ball and the ball is dead.

(M) At the beginning of each half inning, or when a pitcher comes on in relief for another pitcher, no more than two minutes may be used to deliver five pitches to the catcher or teammate. Under the umpire's discretion a pitcher may be awarded more pitches due to inclement weather, injury or other circumstances. An umpire may also speed this process up due to bad weather, in an attempt to get in as much playing time as possible before the bad weather arrives.

(N) If the ball slips from a pitcher's hand during the wind up or during the back swing a ball will be called on the batter and the ball remains in play. Runners may advance at their own risk.

(O) After taking the pitching position the pitcher may not throw to a base while their foot is in contact with the pitching rubber. Should this happen an illegal pitch will be called.

(P) An illegal pitch may also be declared if any fielder takes a position in the batters line of vision or with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, trying to otherwise distract the batter. A pitch does not have to be delivered or released for this to be called.

(Q) No player, manager, or coach shall call "TIME" or use any other phrase, or commit any act while the ball is live and in play for the deliberate purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch. Should this happen, "NO PITCH" will be called by the umpire and a warning issued to the offending team. Should it happen a second time, the offender will be ejected from the game.

**(R) 8 Under Rules are as follows:**

1. *8U Games will be 60 minutes in length – finish the inning or 6 innings, whichever comes first. Championship game for each bracket will be 75 minutes – finish the inning.*
2. No more than 6 runs per inning may be scored; a mercy rule will go into effect at 15-12-10 run differential at the 3rd, 4th and 5th innings.
3. Regardless of the final score in a game, the winning team will be awarded no more than +7 runs, and the losing team no more than -7 runs, i.e. a final game score of 17-8 will award the winning team +7, and the losing team only -7 on the tally board
4. 9 or 10 defensive players positioned anywhere on the field, including all girls on the infield dirt, may be played throughout the game, allowing more girls to be played, or be rested, as needed.
5. All players may bat (but not required to bat). Free substitution on defense is allowed.
6. Batter will get 5 pitches. Contact must be made by the 5th pitch or the batter will be called out. No limit on foul balls.
7. Play will continue with any number of overthrows and any number of bases taken, with the risk of being put out. Running the ball into the pitcher's circle does not stop play.
8. Coach must start AND end with at least 1 foot inside the pitchers circle. If a coach is struck with a batted ball and is outside the circle, an AUTOMATIC out will be called for interference. It's the pitching coach's responsibility to know where the circle is and should ask the umpire for clarification if he/she is unsure. Otherwise, if a coach is struck with a batted ball and has made EVERY attempt to avoid the ball, the umpire will call NO PITCH and reset to the last pitch count. The coach in the pitcher's circle must make every effort to leave the playing field, attempt to remove the bat, and retreat to foul territory, as soon as the ball is in play.
9. Up to TWO coaches may be anywhere in the outfield, fair or foul, to direct the fielders, but they must stay BEHIND the deepest fielder at all times.
10. When the lead runner has been stopped at a base, all runners following her will be held back at their last completed base. There will be a predetermined hash mark on each baseline, indicated in the dirt, prior to the game start. This hash mark will be used by the umpires to help determine which base a runner will be held to.
11. Face masks on helmets are a REQUIREMENT and chin straps should always be used to keep the helmets in place while a player is running the bases. Umpires may inspect the helmets prior to game time.
12. A copy of each player's birth certificate must be available to the Tournament Director at any given time. Please keep this paperwork nearby for the entire course of the day. The information on the birth certificates must match up with the official roster that was turned in prior to the start of your first game.

**(S) The following are suggested pitching distances and base paths. Note: There may be times at certain parks where it's not possible to use these dimensions, but in all cases possible this is what should be used.**

Age	Pitching Distance	Base Path	Playing Field
6 - 8 Under	35 Feet	55 Feet	150 Feet
9 - 10 Under	35 Feet	60 Feet	200 Feet
11 - 12 Under	40 Feet	60 Feet	200 Feet
13 - 14 Under	43 Feet	60 Feet	225 Feet
15 - 16 Under	43 Feet	60 Feet	250 Feet
17 - 18 Under	43 Feet	60 Feet	250 Feet
23 Under	43 Feet	60 Feet	250 Feet