

**STEVENS POINT AREA YOUTH GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION (POINT FASTPITCH)**  
**JUNIOR DIVISION RULES**  
**Amended and adopted – March 2018**

Philosophy: This Division was organized to give Stevens Point area girls the opportunity to participate in organized softball competition. The qualities of personal and team discipline, teamwork, and sportsmanship will also be fostered in a highly developmental environment

Player eligibility: Any girl between the ages of 7– 9 is eligible to play in the Division. Age will be determined as of September 1st, current year.

Minimum playing time: Every player will play the entire game. Extra players will be placed in the outfield. Any deviation from the rule, including discipline of a player, injury, or illness should be discussed with the opposing coach. Violations to the above rule will result in a forfeit. Each player shall play the infield at least one inning per game.

Every player on the roster will be listed on the batting order and will bat in that order regardless of the position she is playing in the field. A player arriving late may enter the game. The player will be added to the last spot in the batting order.

Minimum Players: A team must have at least six (6) players from its own team to play. If a team is short players to play the field, it is to use players from the opposing team as “defensive fill-ins” to have eight (8) defensive players. The “defensive fill-ins” are the last opposing players to bat in the previous inning (or the last players in the batting order if it is the top of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning). The “defensive fill-ins” must play in the outfield. Each team will bat their own players in their lineup. Less than six players will constitute a forfeit and show as a loss in the record. However to allow the girls to play and practice, a team may be formed, and a game played.

Division Games: All games will be six innings in length if time permits. IF the game is tied at the end of SIX innings, OR at the end of the time limit the game will end in a tie. The visiting team gets the first base dugout; the home team gets the third base dugout. Both teams are responsible for bringing out the bases before the first game. Both teams are responsible for putting away the bases after the last game. Each team shall be responsible for cleaning up their dugout and stands after their game.

Time Limit: To keep the games on schedule, the division games shall be conducted under a 70 minute (60 minutes when school is in session) time limit with a hard stop using the following procedure: 1) Time will be kept from the first pitch of the game by the umpire/scorekeeper. 2) The umpire has the authority to adjust time limit, if necessary, because of injury or other delays during the game and shall notify both coaches of any such adjustments as they happen. 3) When the 70 minute time limit is reached, the player batting will finish their at bat, and the game will end.

Cancelled or suspended games: Games called because of the weather will not normally be made up.

Lightning: See Separate ASA Guidelines

Later games may be played at the discretion of the Division Director.

Protests: Protests on rule interpretations should be made according to the official ASA Softball Rules. Protests should be filed with the Division Director who shall appoint a panel of three board members to rule on the protest. Their decisions shall be final. Protests cannot be made on judgment calls.

Uniforms: Uniforms provided by the League are to be worn only for games. They are property of the League and are to be returned at the end of the season. If uniforms are not returned at the end of the season, a fee will be charged to the player. League equipment should also be used only for practices and games. Coaches are responsible for keeping an accurate record of team equipment.

**Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Unsportsmanlike conduct shown by players, coaches, or fans will result in one warning from the umpire. (Example: foul language, arguing calls etc...) A second offense will result in ejection from the game. That person must leave the ballpark. Division Directors should be notified of any incident. Managers, coaches, and scorekeepers are to remain in their dugout with only the coach to enter the field of play, with umpire's permission to discuss a call. Non team personnel are not allowed in the dugout. The use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages in any form is prohibited on the playing field, benches and dugouts. Coaches should ask all parents to refrain from "coaching from the stands"

**Umpires & Announcers:** The league will provide one umpire per game (plate umpire). **A coach must remain on the field while their team is playing defense. In addition to instructing the players between pitches, this coach will also serve as the base umpire if needed by the home plate umpire.** The Division Director may intervene on his/her discretion at any time

**SAFETY:**

- On-deck batters should be in the circle on the backside of the hitter. Example: Right-handed hitter, on-deck batter should be on 3<sup>rd</sup> base side, regardless of dugout location.
- All other coaches shall remain in the dugout

**Special Junior Division Rules:**

1. Pitching:

Games will be either entirely machine pitched or player pitched as determined by Junior Division game schedule.

**Player Pitching Rules:**

- The pitching distance shall be 35 feet.
- The pitcher must wear a facemask for safety. The league will provide a facemask for each team.
- The pitcher must begin each pitch by presenting the ball to the batter with both feet on the pitching plate.
- Both feet must remain in contact with the pitching plate at all times prior to the forward step.
- Any form of underhand pitching will be allowed, including windmill. Slingshot, K or modified is encouraged for pitchers not proficient with the windmill. Whip pitching, with the wrist extended outside the elbow will not be allowed.
- A girl may pitch a maximum of 3 innings per game. Any part of an inning pitched counts as an entire inning. Innings pitched can be non-consecutive, and a pitcher can only return as a pitcher once per game. There are no age restrictions on pitchers within the game (e.g. 9 yr olds may pitch entire game)
- The ball will be considered dead when the catcher throws it back to the pitcher.
- There shall be 4 balls and 3 strikes. NO walks
- **Ball 4 and Coach Pitch:**
  - If the count reaches four balls, the coach from the batting team will pitch, picking up the original strike count. The count will continue with the umpire calling balls and strikes.
  - Coaches shall pitch completely within the 16' pitchers circle and must start on the mound
  - Pitchers must remain within the 16' circle during a coaches pitch situation.

**Machine Pitching Rules**

- The batting team's coach will operate the pitching machine.
- Pitchers will play defense within the 16' circle while the coach operates the pitching machine.
- The batter will get 3 strikes to get a hit.
- If the batter fouls off the 3<sup>rd</sup> or an additional pitch, she will get an additional pitches until she gets a hit or strikes out.

- If a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead, the batter-runner is awarded first base and all base runners are awarded the base they were advancing to.
  - If a thrown ball hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead, the batter-runner and base runners are awarded the base they were advancing to at the time of the dead ball.
2. Hitting:
- All players present will bat.
  - Players must wear protective equipment when batting.
  - Bunting will be permitted. **Players may not bunt when a coach is pitching or when machine pitching.**
  - Hit by Pitch: A player must attempt to get out of the way. It is up to the umpire whether or not the player advances to first base. If the **ball hits the ground before hitting the player, the ball is dead** and player does not get first base.
  - Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is not in effect.
  - The infield fly rule will not be called
3. Fielding:
- All but four infielders excluding the pitcher and catcher shall be on the outfield grass and no infielder except the pitcher shall be more than three steps in front of a base at the start of a pitch.
  - All players present will play in the field. Extra defensive players will be placed in the outfield (not in the dugout.)
  - Players must wear protective equipment when catching or coaching. Catchers should keep their equipment on between innings unless they are schedule to bat in that inning.
4. General Base Running:
- Sliding is encouraged but not mandatory. The runner must make an effort to avoid a collision with a fielder. The runner will be called out if a collision was deemed by the umpire to have been deliberately caused by the runner.
  - A missed base by a runner must be seen and called by the base or field umpire. Coach appeals can be made but are not required for the umpire to make this call. An appeal must be made before the next pitch is made.
  - A 16 foot pitchers' circle will be used. Once the ball is in the pitcher's control inside the circle, it is a dead ball and all base runners must commit to a base or be called out.
5. Guidelines for Base-Running after Overthrows:
- Base runner(s) are allowed to take, at their own risk, one extra base on the FIRST overthrow/catching error made in a defensive attempt to tag a base or tag a runner out.
  - Base runner(s) are not allowed to take an additional base on a second overthrow/catching error during the same defensive play
  - No advancement is allowed on an error in an attempt to get the ball back to the pitcher in the circle.
  - Note: all other fielding errors are not considered FIRST overthrow/error under the runner advancement rules
6. A team may score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning, regardless if it is the last at bat or not.
7. The draft for the Junior Division will be designed to divide teams' talent as equally as possible with consideration for classmates, friends and developing future league coaches

For all rules not addressed above, the current ASA rules will apply

**NOTE:** No set of rules can completely cover each situation that may occur during a game or during the course of the season. Coaches, players, and umpires are expected to meet any unexpected situation with common sense and with cooperation with the good of the program in mind. The Board of Directors reserves the right to make rulings or interpretations on the rules covered in the rule book and our addendums to those rules. Coaches will be expected to abide by those interpretations. Failure to do so may result in the Board taking disciplinary actions. It is not always the strict letter of the rule that may settle a dispute, but the intent of the rule must be considered, and the effect the rule violation has on the outcome of the game. ASA rules will be followed in the event a situation is not covered in the SPAYGSA program or special Junior Division rules. The umpire and/or Division Director's decision is final.