



RULES OF PLAY
REVISED March 6th, 2026

RULES OF PLAY – GAME TIMES & LIMITS

1. SUBJECT TO THE TIME LIMITS SPECIFIED HEREIN, A COMPLETE GAME IS 6 INNINGS FOR 8U, and 7 INNINGS FOR LEVELS THEREIN AND ABOVE.

1.1 Games will be terminated after 6 ½ innings if the home team is ahead. (5 ½ innings in 8U)

1.2 If tied at the end of seven complete innings (six innings in 8U), apply USA Softball Tiebreaker Rule until a winner is determined or a time limit rule comes into effect.

2. TIME LIMITS AND PACE OF PLAY In the interest of fair play, and to create the maximum amount of opportunities for both teams within the Time Limits provided herein, all Coaches are expected to maintain a good “pace of play” at all times. This starts with being prepared with lineup and positioning plans, then during the game encouraging players to “hustle” through warm-up periods, to get back into position between plays, and to expedite through any necessary team meetings or “time-outs”.

2.1 TIME LIMIT FOR REGULAR SEASON GAMES - NO NEW INNING MAY BE STARTED AFTER 1-HOUR 20-MINUTES. REGARDLESS OF THE STATUS OF THE SCORE, WHICH TEAM IS UP, OR RUNNERS ON BASE, PLAY SHALL END (“DROP DEAD”) EXACTLY AT 1- HOUR 30-MINUTES.

2.2 PLAYOFF GAMES – UNLESS EXPRESSLY AGREED BY THE BOARD AND ANY OTHER PARTICIPATING LEAGUES, THE SMGSA PLAYOFF GAME TIME LIMIT SHALL BE “NO NEW INNING AFTER 1-HOUR 30-MINUTES”, WITH A “DROP DEAD” TIME OF 1-HOUR 45- MINUTES, UNLESS THE SCORE IS TIED.

2.3 COMPLETED INNING DEFINITION – An Inning is complete when one of the following conditions is met:

- a) 3 outs are recorded in the bottom of an inning
- b) 5 runs are scored in the bottom of an inning where there is a five run limit.
- c) 3 outs are recorded in the top half of an inning during the “no new inning” period and the home team has the lead.
- d) The home team takes the lead during the "no new inning" period
- e) The home team ties the game and the “drop dead” time limit is reached (this subsection only applies if the home team was trailing or the score was tied before the top half of the inning.

2.4 FINAL INNING SCORES - Runs scored by either team may only be included in the Final

Score for Completed Innings as defined in 2.3 above. Runs scored by either team in INCOMPLETE innings (in particular those not completed due to reaching the “drop dead” time limit) shall not count towards the Final Score, and therefore the Final Score and Win-Loss result shall be recorded based on the last Completed Inning.

2.5 CLOCK MANAGEMENT – VISITING MANAGER’S OPTION TO TERMINATE

AT-BATS Should a Visiting team obtain the lead during what is anticipated to be the last inning (i.e. as the Drop Dead time approaches) the manager of the offensive team may terminate his/her team’s at-bats before the defensive team records the third out of the half-inning. This would be to ensure enough time to allow the Home Team to receive their at-bats, and therefore achieve a Completed Inning and therefore recording all runs scored for a new final result. See Run Ahead Rule 17 for run-ahead limits.

2.6 TIME EXTENSIONS There will be no time extensions unless called for by the umpire due to special extenuating circumstances, such as verified player injuries during the late innings, or “intentional delays” caused by the Coach(es) of the team holding the lead. As provided elsewhere herein, such tactics of “intentional delays” or "attempts to hastened game" are considered unsportsmanlike conduct and may be the subject of disciplinary action (see USA Softball Rule 5 section 4 - E).

3. GAME SUSPENSION DUE TO WEATHER, DARKNESS, ETC.

3.1 If the game must be suspended prior to the completion of 3 ½ innings, or with the home team tied or behind in the bottom of the fourth inning, the game will be resumed at a later date at the point at which it was suspended. All players on the official team rosters on the original game date, unless previously ejected, are eligible to play when the game is resumed, even if they were not present at the original game.

3.2 If the game must be suspended, and the “no new inning” time limit has been reached, or after the completion of four innings, or with the home team ahead in the bottom of the fourth inning, apply the “last batter” game termination Rule 3 above. **This supersedes Rule 3.1 above.**

4. DOUBLE FORFEITS ARE A LOSS FOR BOTH TEAMS In the event that neither team is able to field a minimum of seven players for a scheduled game, a double forfeit will be recorded, and a loss assessed to both teams in the league standings.

5. SPECIAL RULE FOR LEAGUE TOURNAMENT GAMES

5.1 A league tournament game must have a winner. The USA Softball Tiebreaker Rule will be applied in league tournament games that exceed seven innings, (six innings in 8U), or are tied when a time limit rule comes into effect.

5.2 Playoff games shall be subject to a “No new Inning” after 1:20, with no “Drop Dead” time. Tournament championship games will be subject to a “No new inning after 1:30” without a Drop Dead limitation.

6. TIEBREAKERS FOR LEAGUE STANDINGS

6.1 The following tiebreakers are used to break ties in league standings:

Note: Tiebreakers 2 – 4 are only used to determine league tournament seedings. If a tie for a trophy placing cannot be broken using tiebreaker #1 below, all tied teams will receive

trophies.

- 1) Won-Lost record in games between the tied teams(i.e., Head-To-Head)
- 2) Runs allowed in games between the tied teams.
- 3) Runs allowed in all games.
- 4) Coin flip.

7. UMPIRE RESPONSIBILITIES-SUBSTITUTIONS

7.1 If an umpire is late for the start of the game, inform the Umpire-In-Chief or any Board Member present, then recruit a mutually acceptable substitute who will relinquish the duty upon the arrival of the regular umpire after the current full inning is completed.

7.2 An umpire's authority shall begin the minute he/she steps onto the field of play at a respective park and shall remain in authority until he/she leaves the field of play at the conclusion of the game.

8. FIELD RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 Teams are to share in the field preparation, field breakdown, and field cleanup responsibilities. Each team is responsible for policing its side of the field and bleacher area upon completion of the game. All teams who have completed their games are to vacate the field immediately if another game is scheduled to follow. Teams who have the last game of the day are to secure the league's equipment in the field's respective storage containers.

9. PLAYER INNING REQUIREMENTS

SPRING Season

6U and 8U Divisions - Every player must play at least one defensive inning on the dirt (infield), at least two defensive innings, and should never sit out two consecutive innings unless due to injury, illness, or player/parent request. All other reasons would require approval by the Board Player Agent and, if a conflict with fair play is in question, the Board Competition Committee. **Playoff games are exempt.**

10U-14U - Every player must play at least two defensive innings, and should never sit out two consecutive innings unless due to injury, illness, or player/parent request. All other reasons would require approval by the Board Player Agent and, if a conflict with fair play is in question, the Board Competition Committee. **Playoff games are exempt.**

FALL Season

All Divisions: Every player must play at least one defensive inning on the dirt (infield), at least two defensive innings, and should never sit out two consecutive innings unless due to injury, illness, or player/parent request. All other reasons would require approval by the Board Player Agent and, if a conflict with fair play is in question, the Board Competition Committee. **Playoff games are exempt.**

10. GAME STARTING REQUIREMENTS

10.1 A team will forfeit any game in which it is not able to field a minimum of **seven** players at the umpire's official game start time. A forfeit will also be assessed if a team is unable to continue, or finish a game with a minimum of **seven** players. This rule also applies in the event of a player injury that reduces a team below the minimum of **seven** players.

This rule applies to all age divisions, including those that field ten players on defense. Any team forced to play with only **seven** players will be required to take a mandatory out every time the eighth spot in the batting order comes up. A team forced to play shorthanded with at least **eight** players **WILL NOT** be penalized in this manner. Vacant position(s) must be listed last in the batting order.

10.2 SOURCING POOL PLAYERS TO MITIGATE FORFEITS – Following the Draft, the Player Agent and Division Commissioners shall identify a POOL of NON-IMPACT players for use amongst any short-handed teams during the regular season (the "Pool Players").\

10.2 A) To create opportunities for those players who need experience most, and to mitigate imbalance created by any pool players who may dominate a game, the Pool Players shall generally be identified from amongst the MIDDLE TO LOWER point scores in the player ratings utilized in the current Draft. They shall also be drawn as evenly as possible from each team within the respective divisions.

10.2 B) Should the only Pool Player(s) available be IMPACT PLAYERS (i.e. Pitchers, Catchers or highly skilled infielders), playing them in those positions is prohibited without approval by the opposing Manager. Additionally, Pool Players should be placed at the bottom of the batting lineup.

10.2 C) The Purpose of Pool Players is ONLY to bring a team up to 8 players, thereby preventing penalties of any kind for playing with 7 or less. It is NOT the purpose of Pool Players to fill out a team to 4 outfielders, or any other such advantage for a team that is effectively short. The short handed team may play with 2 outfielders, or ask the opposing team to borrow a 3rd outfielder on defense. Lending such an outfielder is encouraged.

10.3 D) It is the responsibility of the TEAM MANAGER to contact the Player Agent to procure Pool Player(s) to attend that team's game, a minimum of 48 hours notice, or AS SOON AS A POTENTIAL FORFEIT IS VERIFIED (whichever is sooner). Managers SHALL NOT solicit players directly, the Managers should only interact with the Player Agent to procure Pool Player(s).

10.4 E) Sending Pool Players home is discouraged, out of respect for helpful Pool Player Families who are offering their time and often purchasing apparel to match the team in need. The MANAGER must continue through game day to perform thorough due diligence with all team families to verify the number of players who will indeed be attending.

11. DUGOUT REQUIREMENTS FOR PLAYERS

11.1 Players not at bat, on deck, base running, or in defensive positions are required to remain in the dugout during the game. Teams playing on fields without permanent dugouts will consider specific seating in the out-of-play area as the dugout.

12. MANAGER AND COACH REQUIREMENTS

12.1 Coaches and Team Volunteers are NOT AUTHORIZED to participate in practice or game events, or be ON THE FIELD at any time with the Team, until they have completed all USA Softball and SMGSA requirements as specified by the Board Registrar. These requirements include, but may not be limited to, current background verifications, concussion and safety training, and mandatory informational clinics. Managers are responsible to work with the Board Registrar to ensure all Team Coaches/Volunteers are fully compliant.

12.2 NUMBER OF COACHES A maximum three official coaches are allowed on the field during games, including one Team manager and two assistants. Teams may elect to add a 4th league approved volunteer in the Dugout, generally referred to as the Team Parent. Of these 4 total Team Volunteers, only the Team Manager may address the Umpire(s).

12.2 COACH POSITIONING DURING GAMES

OFFENSE - When on OFFENSE, only TWO of the three coaches may be ON the field – one positioned as the FIRST BASE coach, who must remain at all times his or her designated 1B coach box, and one positioned as the THIRD BASE coach, who must also remain in his or her designated 3B coach box. The Third team coach must remain in the offensive team’s dugout, along with the Team Parent, if applicable.

DEFENSE - When on DEFENSE, only ONE coach may be ON the field, positioned in their own team’s ON-DECK circle area. The other two coaches may also communicate with all players in the field, however they must remain in the dugout and OFF THE FIELD.

12.3 Only at the 6U level, Team Managers may mutually agree to allow additional of their respective approved coaches on the field, in order to enhance player guidance. At the 8U level a team may have a defensive coach in the outfield.

Should any coach or team parent be ejected from the game, he/she may not be replaced.

12.4 CONDUCT REQUIREMENT All adults participating in a SMGSA event, starting with Managers and Coaches, are to adhere to SMGSA's Code of Conduct which is outlined in the Mission and Vision/Values statements. The Code of Conduct also includes, but is not limited to, clean language, fair play and good sportsmanship practices, showing respect to all other coaches, umpires, players and parents, and in general treating all SMGSA members the way one wishes to be treated.

12.3 POSITIVE CHEER RULE At no time may a coach or player audibly address, or refer to the opposing team, unless such communication is encouraging and/or positive (such as, “nice play.”) It is especially unsportsmanlike to scream, make noise or any personal comments to distract an opposing player – especially the pitcher or current batter.

All coaches, league families and players are encouraged to see the extensive list of POSITIVE CHEERS posted on SMGSA.org!

12.4 MANAGER LEADERSHIP Managers shall function as the primary example and leader

in controlling the behavior of their Team's parents, relatives, fans, or any other distractions to players or the overall game.

At all times special care must be taken by adults to manage discussions or language not appropriate for children. Should this responsibility create conflicts for the Manager, or disruption(s) to the team's experience, the Manager is encouraged to immediately CALL TIME-OUT to discuss management of the situation with the Umpire and Opposing Manager, and if necessary seek support from any Board Member in attendance. The available Board Member may elect to contact the Board Player Agent, and/or League President to advise on next steps. Should a situation be addressed immediately without the need for Player Agent or League President involvement, the event(s) shall be reported to them later to ensure to ensure full resolution in support of the Team, the Team Manager, and any other parties involved.

13. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

At the discretion of the Umpire or any League Officials present, unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but may not be limited to disruptive arguing of umpire calls, use of illegal equipment, dangerous plays, intentional DELAY OF GAME, coaches out of position, foul language, physical or verbal abuse of any individual (especially players), and in general any hurtful or intentionally distracting behavior.

FIRST OFFENSES - The Umpire may elect to issue warning(s) to the specific offenders, or to the team as a whole.

SECOND OFFENSE - Upon a second violation, the Umpire may call an OUT against the team that the offender(s) are representing. Should the second offense occur while the offending team is playing defense, the Umpire may elect to start the next inning with 1 out.

EJECTION - Based on the level of offense or disruption to the game, the Umpire may elect to escalate discipline directly to EJECTION of the offender(s).

Unsportsmanlike Conduct involving hurtful behavior, suspected abuse, or accusations towards any player shall be maintained as CONFIDENTIAL so as to minimize distractions or delays to the game, or any further escalations that may affect a player or team's experience moving forward. If necessary, the Board's Concern Committee may be contacted to conduct further investigation in order to reach a sound resolution.

13.1 POST-GAME PROCESS FOR EJECTIONS A manager, coach, player, parent or spectator ejected from a game will incur an automatic one game suspension, to be served immediately, beginning with the next game. A game is described as the moment the umpire steps onto the field of play and until he/she leaves the field of play at the game's conclusion. The suspended manager, coach, player, parent or spectator is not to attend the game or be in the park before, during, or after the game. In the event of an ejection, the game umpire shall speak directly with the League President and offer an ejection report to the UIC. The League President will subsequently notify the Player Agent, and file a Complaint Form with the Board's Concern Committee, should the Player Agent suggest an investigation for mitigating circumstances.

A manager, coach, player, parent or spectator who is ejected from a second game will receive an automatic three game suspension, with a hearing to be scheduled in front of the Executive Board to determine if the individual can continue to participate in the league.

14. "RUN AHEAD RULE"

14.1 The team in the lead will be declared the winner if ahead by the stated number of runs after completion of the following number of innings:

- Four innings(3 ½ if home ahead) - 12 runs
- Five innings(4 ½ if home ahead) - 10 runs
- Six innings(5 ½ if home ahead) - 8 runs

17. NOTIFICATION OF BENCHED PLAYERS

17.1 Opposing managers and the umpire must be notified prior to a game if a player in attendance is to be benched or is injured. The team manager must receive permission from the Player Agent or the Director of Coaching at least 24 hours prior to benching a player for disciplinary actions.

18. COURTESY RUNNERS

18.1 Only the pitcher and catcher may have courtesy runners. The courtesy runner will be the person that made the last out. In the event that no outs have been recorded in the current half-inning, the courtesy runner must be the first player preceding the replaced player who is not already on base at the time.

19. GAME RESCHEDULING

19.1 Games will not be rescheduled unless required by weather, or other improper playing conditions. Games may not be rescheduled until the Scheduler and Umpire-In-Chief have been contacted regarding field and umpire availability.

The Scheduler will assign a game reschedule date if either manager is unable to agree on an appropriate date within fourteen days of the originally scheduled game.

20. GAME CANCELLATION

20.1 If no message is posted on the league website, (www.smsgsa.org) canceling the game two hours prior to start time, teams are required to show up or risk forfeit. The umpire will make game time decisions as appropriate and as weather conditions warrant.

20.2 PROTESTS

Refer to the “USA Softball Official Rules of Softball”, “Rule 9 – Protests”.

20.3 All protests shall be submitted **IN WRITING**, and hand delivered, emailed, or postmarked to the League President, or ranking League official if the President position is vacant, within 48 hours. The Protest Committee, as provided in the League Bylaws, **MUST** interview both managers and the umpire of record to determine the facts, then will meet to resolve the protest. A decision of the committee will be made within seven days and will be final.

21. HOME/VISITOR DETERMINATION

21.1 Home team is listed second on the schedule and will occupy the 3rd base dugout. With regard to Tournament games and/or playoff games, the “Home” team will be the team with the higher seed in the Winner’s Bracket. The “Home” team in the Loser’s Bracket shall be designated as “coin flip” games for the purpose of determining home/visitor.

22. PLAYERS LEAVING DURING GAME TIME

22.1 If a player is unable to bat during a game due to any reason (e.g., physical injury, early departure, restroom use, etc.), the batting team shall notify the umpire and opposing manager and skip her spot in the batting order **WITHOUT PENALTY**.

If a player is unable to complete her responsibilities as a batter because of injury, she will be replaced by the next player in the batting order, who will assume the ball-strike count of the injured player.

If a player is unable to complete her responsibilities as a runner because of injury, she will be replaced by the most recent out of the affected team. In the event that no outs have been recorded in the current half inning, the courtesy runner must be the first player preceding the replaced player who is not already on base at the time.

If a Rule 23 event reduces a team below seven players, that team will forfeit the game.

23. ON DECK CIRCLE VIOLATIONS and HELMET RULE

23.1 As noted in the specific GROUND RULES Section for Alverno High School and Meyer Field, there are **NO ON DECK BATTING CIRCLES** at these fields. For safety reasons **WARM UP SWINGS ARE NOT ALLOWED**.

23.2 A player must wear a helmet with attached face guard when entering the on deck circle at fields where such an area is designated. Additionally, a player may not remove her helmet until she enters the dugout area at the conclusion of her batter/runner responsibilities. **Exception – Rule does not apply if a helmet falls off while a player is running the bases.**

If a player violates Rule 24, the umpire will issue a warning. The second and subsequent infractions in one game will result in a team out. Example: After two outs have been recorded, and one warning already issued, a batter removes her helmet while standing on first base. The third out will be called. The player at bat at the time of the infraction will start her at bat again in her team’s next offensive inning.

24. POINTS OF EMPHASIS

24.1 8-Foot Circle or “Look Back Rule”

Managers and coaches are strongly advised to become familiar with the USA Softball 8-foot circle, or “Look Back Rule.”

24.2 Dead Ball Base Awards

Managers and coaches are strongly advised to become familiar with the USA Softball rules regarding base awards to runners when a live ball enters dead ball territory.

24.3 Legal Delivery

Managers and coaches are strongly advised to become familiar with the rules concerning the Legal Delivery, as defined in USA Softball Rule 6 – PITCHING REGULATIONS (Fast Pitch).

24.4 Catcher Safety

Managers and coaches must adhere to USA Softball Rule 3 – EQUIPMENT. Any player warming up a Junior Olympic pitcher must wear an approved catcher's helmet and mask.

24.5 Charged Conferences

Three charged conferences between the manager and/or other team representative from the dugout with any defensive player are allowed in a regulation game. **EFFECT: Any excess conferences will result in the removal of the current pitcher for the remainder of the current defensive inning. NOTE: USA Softball rules regarding additional conferences allowed during games longer than seven innings apply as written.**

24.6 Baserunner Interference

Managers and coaches are strongly advised to become familiar with the USA Softball Rule regarding base runner interference.

24.7 Defensive Obstruction

Managers and coaches are strongly advised to become familiar with the USA Softball Rule regarding defensive obstruction of baserunners.

24.8 Helmet Face Guard Requirement

USA Softball requires that all batters use an approved batting helmet. Additionally, SMGSA requires that helmets have an approved face guard attached. These rules apply in all games, including practice games, regular spring and fall seasons, and summer all-star play.

24.9 Metal Cleats Prohibited (with ONE Exception)

As per the current Sierra Madre City Field Use Agreement under which Sierra Madre Girls Softball Operates at Heasley Field, metal cleats are NOT allowed at any time, by any age level. In any case, Metal cleats are not allowed for 6U, 8U, 10U or 12U divisions. Only for 14U players, the ONE EXCEPTION is for specific games when a team visiting from another league or region is known to be wearing metal cleats. To promote even competition, only on that day may 14U SMGSA players may wear metal cleats.

24.10 Infield Face Mask Requirement

SMGSA requires all players playing in infield positions to wear a protective face mask. This

rule applies to 8u-14u divisions and includes all games and practices with live at bats, including spring and fall seasons as well as summer All-Star play.

25. 6U DIVISION EXTENDED RULES –

25.1 SIERRA MADRE DIVISION Age Requirements

A) SPRING Season: As of September 1 of the current year, 6U Players must be 6 years of age or YOUNGER. Any player who has turned 7 on or before September 1 must play in the 8U division. Registration will allow for players to be registered as young as 5 as of September 1 of the current year. Parents of players who have not turned 5 yet may contact the League Registrar or President about special early admission. In such cases one or both Parents are required to serve as a Coach or Team Parent Volunteer so as to provide their younger player extra support.

B) FALL Season: 6U Players in SMGSA are subject to the age requirements for the NEXT Spring Season. Therefore, any player turning 7 prior to September 1 of the upcoming calendar year shall “PLAY UP” into the 8U division.

25.2 General Game Rules

All players present will bat once each inning, regardless of the number of defensive outs recorded. Late arrivals will be inserted at the bottom of the order. Managers are encouraged to change the batting order for each game, as players placed near the top of the lineup will have more opportunities to score runs.

Each game will consist of a minimum of two innings. Every player present for the entire game will have a minimum of two plate appearances, regardless of elapsed time. Play may continue after two complete innings up to a time limit of one hour and fifteen minutes.

The 6U Division will use a 10” USA Softball approved softball, hit from an underhand throw from a Coach, or off a tee should that provide the best experience for certain players.

Standings will not be maintained and game scores will not be posted.

25.3 Defense

Every player present will play in the field during her team’s entire defensive half-inning. Six players will be assigned infield positions, including “pitcher” and catcher, and the rest will be spread across the outfield. All outfielders are required to remain at least 20 feet behind the baselines until the ball is pitched. The “pitcher” must remain within the 8-foot radius circle until the ball is hit.

Managers should rotate players to different defensive positions often, preferably every three batters. All players should be given the opportunity to play infield positions. After a batted ball, defensive players should be encouraged to “make a play” (i.e. throw to a base, rather than always return the ball to the pitcher,) to improve their skills and knowledge of the game.

Three coaches are allowed **in the outfield** during a team’s defensive half-inning. These coaches are to provide defensive instruction. If an outfield coach inadvertently touches a live batted ball, the ball will remain in play as though it had not been touched.

The infield fly rule is not in effect for the 6U Division.

25.4 Coach-Pitcher

The pitching distance for the 6U Division is 30 feet from the front edge of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate.

Each half-inning, the team batting will provide a coach to deliver a **maximum of three** underhand pitches to each batter from his/her own team. If a batter fails to hit a fair ball after three pitches, she will be given **three** attempts to hit a fair ball off of a batting tee. If a player fails to hit a fair ball off of the tee, she is out. To ensure fair play, under no circumstances will a batter be allowed more than the specified number of attempts.

After a fair batted ball, the coach-pitcher must exit the playing field away from the direction the ball is hit, and make every effort to avoid interference. If the coach-pitcher inadvertently touches a live batted ball, the ball will remain in play as though it had not been touched. The coach-pitcher is not to play defense.

25.5 Baserunning

No stealing bases.

No leading off until the ball is hit.

After a play is made on a fair batted ball, the ball is dead upon return to the pitcher within the 8-foot radius circle. It is not necessary for the pitcher to control the ball. All runners will return to the last base touched, or if more than halfway to the next base, will advance to the next base. After a fair batted ball, runners may attempt to advance on any overthrow remaining in play. As in all SMGSA divisions, an overthrow that goes out of play will result in a two base award from where the runner was when the thrown ball left the fielder's hand.

26. 8U DIVISION EXTENDED RULES

26.1 SIERRA MADRE 8U DIVISION Age Requirements

A) SPRING Season: As of September 1 of the current year, 8U Players must be 8 years of age or YOUNGER. Any player who has turned 9 on or before September 1 must play in the 10U division.

B) FALL Season: 8U Players in SMGSA are subject to the age requirements for the NEXT Spring Season. Therefore, any player turning 9 prior to September 1 of the upcoming calendar year shall "PLAY UP" into the 10U division.

26.2 Baserunning

A) Runners starting at first or second base are entitled to steal only one base per pitch.

B) A runner starting at third base may not steal home, but is liable to be put out if off the base.

C) If a batter strikes out and the ball is dropped by the catcher or touches the ground before reaching the catcher, the batter is out (no dropped third strike rule,) **and the ball is life.**

D) A batter, who receives a base on balls, cannot advance beyond first base. If the batter-runner advances further, once the ball becomes dead, she will be returned to first base.

E) A runner, attempting to advance beyond the base they are entitled to advance or steal may be put out while between bases. A runner cannot be put out while in contact with a base.

F) After all play ceases and the ball is dead, if a runner occupies a base beyond the one she was entitled to, she will be returned to the correct base without liability to be put out.

G) The infield fly rule is not in effect for the 8U Division.

26.3 Ten Defensive Players Allowed

The 8U Division will play with ten players on the field. The tenth player must play as a fourth outfielder. All outfielders are required to remain at least 20 feet behind the baselines until the ball is pitched.

26.4 Batting Order / Substitutions

All players on the team roster in attendance will bat in a designated batting order. Late arrivals are added to the bottom of the batting order. Free defensive substitution is allowed.

26.5 Ball Requirements

The 8U Division will use a 10" USA Softball approved softball.

26.6 Pitching Distance

Pitching distance for the 8U Division is 30 feet from the front edge of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate.

26.7 Maximum Runs Per Half-Inning

In the 8U Division, Five Runs per inning will be in effect through the first three (3) innings. The half inning will be declared over when the offensive team scores five (5) runs. Additional runs in excess of five (5) during continuous action shall not count. All additional innings beginning in the fourth inning will be open.

In the 8U Division, Fall Season Only, no more than four runs may be scored per half-inning. The run limit is not waived after three innings in the Fall Season Only.

26.8 Coach Pitch Rules

A) After one walk per half inning, when four balls are called on a batter, the manager or a coach from the offensive team will come in to pitch to that batter. The batter retains the number of strikes in the count. Every pitch delivered by a coach-pitcher is considered a strike. The batter must hit one of the pitches delivered by the coach or be called out. A coach pitch **DOES NOT** count if the batter has two strikes and hits a foul ball that is not caught, or if the batter is hit by a coach pitch. **Bunting and stealing are not allowed during coach-pitch.**

Example: The batter has one strike when ball four is called by the umpire. The coach-pitcher assumes the strike count, and will deliver up to two pitches to the batter, subject to the exceptions above.

B) The player-pitcher must remain within the lines of the 8-foot radius circle while the coach-pitcher is pitching. The coach-pitcher delivers pitches from the regulation 30 foot pitching distance, and does not play defense. After a fair batted ball, the coach-pitcher must exit the playing field away from the direction the ball is hit, and make every effort to avoid interference. If the coach-pitcher inadvertently touches a live batted ball, the ball will remain in play as though it had not been touched. Only one individual per half-inning may be designated as “coach-pitcher”.

C) If a batter is hit by a pitch delivered by the player-pitcher, the batter will have the option to either:

1. **Advance to first base** and be awarded a hit-by-pitch, or
2. **Continue the at bat using coach-pitch** (3 total pitches)

If the batter elects coach-pitch, the offensive team’s designated coach-pitcher will deliver **three (3) pitches**. The batter must put one of these pitches into play or will be declared out. A foul ball on the third coach pitch that is not caught will result in an additional pitch until the ball is either put in play or the batter is out.

A **hit-by-pitch does not count as the one walk per half-inning** used to trigger coach-pitch.

26.9 Defensive Outfield Coach

One coach is allowed in the outfield during a team’s defensive half-inning. The coach is to provide defensive instruction. If the outfield coach inadvertently touches a live batted ball, the ball will remain in play as though it had not been touched.

26.10 Multiple Pitchers

Spring Season

Managers must use more than one pitcher per game, the second pitcher must face a minimum of four batters or three recorded outs. If a team has only one pitcher available to pitch in a given game this must be communicated to the 8U commissioner and opposing manager prior to the game starting. **THIS RULE DOES NOT APPLY IN PLAYOFF GAMES**

Fall Season

A pitcher is only allowed to pitch a maximum of two innings in any game. If a team has only one pitcher available to pitch in a given game this must be communicated to the 8U commissioner and opposing manager prior to the game starting. **THIS RULE DOES NOT APPLY IN PLAYOFF GAMES**

26.11 Complete game is six innings

Game will be terminated after 5 ½ innings if the home team is ahead. If tied at the end of six complete innings, apply USA Softball Tiebreaker Rule until a winner is determined or a time limit rule comes into effect.

26.12 Special Rule for league tournament games

A league tournament game must have a winner. The USA Softball Tiebreaker Rule will be applied in league tournament games that exceed six innings or are tied when a time limit rule comes into effect.

26.13 Season scores and standings

For the first two weeks of the spring season, beginning opening day and extending to through the Sunday of the second week, scores and standings will not count towards the team's win- loss record. Standings will be kept beginning on the Monday of the third week in order to determine placement for season ending trophies and seeding for the end of the season tournament.

27. 10U DIVISION EXTENDED RULES

27.1 SIERRA MADRE 10U DIVISION Age Requirements

A) SPRING Season: As of September 1 of the current year, 10U Players must be 10 years of age or YOUNGER. Any player who has turned 11 on or before September 1 must play in the 12U division.

B) FALL Season: 10U Players in SMGSA are subject to the age requirements for the NEXT Spring Season. Therefore, any player turning 11 prior to September 1 of the upcoming calendar year shall "PLAY UP" into the 12U division.

27.2 Ten Defensive Players Allowed

The 10U Division will play with ten players on the field. The tenth player must play as a fourth outfielder. All outfielders are required to remain at least 20 feet behind each baseline until the ball is pitched.

27.3 Batting Order / Substitutions

All players on the team roster in attendance will bat in a designated batting order. Late arrivals are added to the bottom of the batting order. Free defensive substitution is allowed.

27.4 Ball Requirements

The 10U Division will use an 11" USA Softball approved softball.

27.5 Pitching Distance

The pitching distance for the 10U Division is 35 feet from the front edge of the pitching plate to

the back point of home plate.

27.6 Maximum Runs Per Half-Inning

In the 10U Division, Five Runs per inning will be in effect through the first three (3) innings. The half inning will be declared over when the offensive team scores five (5) runs. Additional runs in excess of five (5) during continuous action shall not count. All additional innings beginning in the fourth inning will be open.

In the 10U Division, Fall Season Only, no more than four runs may be scored per half-inning. The run limit is not waived after three innings in the Fall Season Only. The Spring Rule will apply in all Fall Playoff Games.

27.7 Multiple Pitchers Recommendation

Managers are strongly encouraged to use more than one pitcher per game, with at least two pitchers each allowed to pitch a minimum of one complete defensive half-inning. When a team has more than one pitcher available, secondary pitchers should be provided with frequent opportunities to develop their skills. A complete game by the starting pitcher should be a rare occurrence.

Examples of situations where it might be reasonable to waive this recommendation include, but are not limited to the following:

A team has only one pitcher available to pitch in a given game. (Should be communicated to the opposing manager before the start of the game.)

A second pitcher is injured or becomes otherwise unavailable during a game.

Fall Season

A pitcher is only allowed to pitch a maximum of two innings in any game. If a team has only one pitcher available to pitch in a given game this must be communicated to the 8U commissioner and opposing manager prior to the game starting. **THIS RULE DOES NOT APPLY IN PLAYOFF GAMES**

28. 12U / 14U EXTENDED RULES

28.1 SIERRA MADRE 12U / 14U DIVISION Age Requirements

A) SPRING Season: As of September 1 of the current year, 12U Players must be 12 years of age or YOUNGER. Any player who has turned 13 on or before September 1 must play in the 14U division. Any player who has turned 15 on or before September 1 is no longer eligible to play in SMGSA.

B) FALL Season: 12U Players in SMGSA are subject to the age requirements for the NEXT Spring Season. Therefore, any player turning 13 prior to September 1 of the upcoming calendar year shall "PLAY UP" into the 14U division. Players turning 15 prior to September 1 of the CURRENT Calendar Year are no longer eligible to play in the Fall Season.

28.2 Batting Order / Substitutions

All Players on the team roster in attendance will bat in a designated batting order. Late arrivals are to be added to the bottom of the batting order. Free defensive substitution is allowed.

28.3 Pitching Distance

Pitching distance for the 12U Division is 40 feet from the front edge of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate. Pitching distance for the 14U Division is 43 feet at all fields EXCEPT HEASLEY FIELD, where the distance will remain at 40 feet.

28.4 Multiple Pitchers Recommendation

Managers are strongly encouraged to use more than one pitcher per game, with at least two pitchers each allowed to pitch a minimum of one complete defensive half-inning. When a team has more than one pitcher available, secondary pitchers should be provided with frequent opportunities to develop their skills. A complete game by the starting pitcher should be a rare occurrence.

Examples of situations where it might be reasonable to waive this recommendation include, but are not limited to the following:

A team has only one pitcher available to pitch in a given game. (Should be communicated to the opposing manager before the start of the game.)

A second pitcher is injured or becomes otherwise unavailable during a game.

Fall Season

A pitcher is only allowed to pitch a maximum of two innings in any game. If a team has only one pitcher available to pitch in a given game this must be communicated to the 12U/14U commissioner and opposing manager prior to the game starting. **THIS RULE DOES NOT APPLY IN PLAYOFF GAMES**

28.5 Ball Requirements

The 12U & 14U Divisions will use a 12" USA Softball approved softball.

28.6 Maximum Runs Per Half-Inning

In the 12U and 14U Divisions, Five Runs per inning will be in effect through the first three (3) innings. The half inning will be declared over when the offensive team scores five (5) runs. Additional runs in excess of five (5) during continuous action shall not count. All additional innings beginning in the fourth inning will be open.

In the 12U and 14U Divisions, **Fall Season Only**, no more than four runs may be scored per half-inning. The run limit is not waived after three innings in the Fall Season Only. The Spring Rule will apply in all Fall Playoff Games.

29. GROUND RULES

29.1 SIERRA MADRE MIDDLE SCHOOL

- 1) The imaginary out-of-play lines extend from both ends of the backstop parallel to the foul lines. (Southwest field)
- 2) No games are to be played on Meyer Field (Northeast field), due to layout of the field and the ADA path on the right field line.

29.2 ALVERNO HIGH SCHOOL

- 1) The embankment beyond the right field is out of play. Any fair untouched batted ball that enters this area is a double. The precise beginning of the embankment area is left to the judgment of the umpire.
- 2) The paved area beyond left field is out of play. Any fair untouched batted ball that enters this area is a home run.
- 3) The imaginary out-of-play lines extend from both dugout fences parallel to the foul lines.
- 4) Any batted ball contacting tree branches extending over the field prior to touching the ground will be ruled a “dead ball”. The count to the batter will be treated as if a batted ball landed untouched in foul territory.
- 5) Due to limited space and the severe risk of injuries, there will be NO on-deck circle or warm up swings allowed by the on-deck batter!**

29.3 SIERRA MADRE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- 1) The imaginary out-of-play lines extend from both ends of the backstop fencing parallel to the foul lines.
- 2) In the absence of a temporary outfield fence, a fair untouched batted ball reaching the left or center field chain link fence, or the area beyond the backstop in center field is a home run.

29.4 VICTORY PARK - FIELD 4

- 1) In right field, an imaginary out-of-play line extends in a straight line from the end of the backstop/dugout fence to the end of the Field 3 outfield fence.
- 2) A fair untouched batted ball entering the playground beyond left field is a home run.