

# ABILENE SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

## RULES OF PLAY

Revised 1-4-2010

### I. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- A. All players under 18 years of age must have parent's or guardian's signature on all contracts before they are eligible to play. Men may not play on Women's Teams and Women may not play on Men's Teams.
- B. Each player must have paid \$15.00 registration fee to the association for each team played with in the current year. The player's valid driver's license number must appear on each contract submitted. Player and manager must personally sign contract.
- C. A player who wishes to transfer to a new team may become eligible only by following this procedure:
  - 1. Upon quitting a team, the player must obtain an official, signed release from the former team's manager.
  - 2. After obtaining a release, the player must sign a contract with the new team and pay a new \$15.00 registration fee.
  - 3. The player must wait 2 full games played by the new team after the date of his release before playing.
  - 4. If a player's further participation on a team is denied by the manager, coach or sponsor, the player will be considered eligible to play with another team after being denied the opportunity to play three consecutive games with his or her current team. If a player desires to invoke this rule he or she must notify the association office in writing to begin the three game period. The association will in turn notify the current team manager or coach that the player is invoking this rule.
- D. Any player who has been suspended from play for reasons other than the normal league ejection rules and has not been reinstated shall be considered ineligible for any ASSA affiliated play.

- E. In order for a team to be officially disbanded, a team manager must submit written notification of the release of all players to the ASSA office. Until this official notification is received all opponents must be at the field at game time.
- F. Any team withdrawing from the association will be considered to have forfeited its remaining games, and there will be no refund of entrance fees.
- G. A player from a disbanded team shall be considered the same as an unsigned player. A new player contract and \$15.00 registration fee must be submitted before the player is eligible to play.
- H. A player who violates eligibility requirements shall be suspended. Length of suspension shall be determined by the Executive Board.
- I. Any team using an ineligible player will forfeit all games in which the ineligible player has played.
- \*J. Players are not restricted to any maximum number of contacts in any one season; however, all multiple contracts must be turned in at the deadline meeting. That is, after the deadline meeting no team is allowed to sign a player already under contract to another team in the same league. This applies to all leagues excepting Church.
- K. No player contracts may be turned in after 6:15 p.m. on game days.
- L. A question of player identity shall be settled by umpire at time of question. Such identity questions may be raised by an umpire or the opposing coach/manager.
- M. All players must be able to produce valid ID with picture upon request of umpire. Player in question must produce picture ID within three minutes, after which time the substitution rule goes into effect.
- N. The ASSA executive board has authority over all ASSA activities.

**II. PLAYER CONDUCT**

- A. Any profanity, vulgarity, unnecessary roughness, or misconduct of any kind will not be tolerated, and the umpire may eject a player from the game for this type of violation. A player may be referred to the USSSA Commissioner for disciplinary action for such misconduct after review by the ASSA Executive Board.
- B. Players or coaches suspended are restricted from attending games.
- C. Umpires have jurisdiction over any unsportsmanlike conduct or language of players, coaches, managers, or anyone on the field. If such conduct continues or is adjudged flagrant, the offender shall be ordered from the grounds. If a player refuses to leave a game after being ejected, the umpire will notify the manager that he has one minute to remove the player from the complex or an immediate forfeit will be called.
- D. Umpires may eject a player from any game in accordance with the official rules. Such ejection will result in that player being denied participation in or attendance at any regular ASSA league activity until such time as that player will have been suspended from two (2) complete games of the team for which he/she was playing at the time of the ejection. Any protest of an ejection or flagrant violation will be acted upon by the Executive Board. Any ejection must be recorded on the score sheet for that game.
- E. Any player, coach, or sponsor, who, in the judgment of an umpire, verbally or physically abuses said umpire either before or after a game while still within an association complex, may be subject to a suspension upon that umpire's filing of a written statement of complaint with the Executive Board. Any player so suspended has the right to request a hearing before the Suspension/Rules Committee. The player's request must be made in writing within 24 hours of his being notified of his suspension with a \$25.00 fee attached. If the suspension is overturned by the Executive Board, the \$25.00 fee will be returned; otherwise, it will be retained by the association.

- F. As per city ordinance, players in or out of uniform may not consume alcoholic beverages within the confines of Nelson Park.
- G. Players in or out of uniform who fight, agitate a fight, are drunk, or violate city ordinances within the confines of Nelson Park are subject to suspension at the discretion of the Board.
- H. Smoking is not allowed on the field of play.
- I. Only the manager will be allowed to discuss a play with the umpire.

### **III. CONDUCT OF GAME**

- A. All league play shall be governed by the rules as set forth in the official rule book of the United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA), except as amended by the local association.
- B. All teams must be ready to start exactly at the time scheduled with no period of grace. A team not ready to play when "Play Ball" is called by the umpire will be forced to forfeit.
- C. In case there be spectators on the field, on the player's benches, or too close to the foul lines to permit freedom of the players while attempting to field the ball, the umpire shall stop the game until such parties be removed to a safe distance. The managers are asked to cooperate and ask the umpire to enforce this rule.
- D. During the game, all members of the batting team, with the exception of the batter and the on-deck batter, must remain in their bench area and in no way interfere with the conduct of the game by waving of arms or running along the base lines. In case of disputes, only the manager of each team may engage in the discussion. It is the duty of each team manager and umpire to enforce this rule.  
PENALTY: Expulsion from the game. If done repeatedly: suspension from parks.

- E. Only players, managers, two coaches, sponsor and one bat boy or girl for each team will be allowed on the playing field, benches, base areas, or inside the playing field fence. For safety reasons, no scorekeeper will be permitted on the playing field. Any boy or girl serving as batboy must be at least ten years old. The batting rack must be kept inside the bench area.
  
- F. If a game is extended beyond the scheduled starting time of another game, the teams having the following game must be ready to play at the ending of the game or they shall forfeit. The umpire shall forfeit the game if either team does not have eight (8) players to start the game.
  
- G. The lineup shall be declared official at the start of the game clock.
  
- H. The lineup turned in by the manager must give players' full names and numbers, and should include the full names of potential substitutes as well. Lineups will be turned in to the umpire in proper form at game time. A lineup not turned in could result in a forfeit.
  
- I. Teams must use USSSA approved balls purchased from the ASSA.
  
- J. (M) (C) & (CE) Games will be played under a 25 runs after three innings, 20 run after four innings or 15 runs after five innings rule.  
  
(W) Games will be played under a 20 runs after three innings, 15 runs after four innings or 10 runs after five innings rule.  
  
USSSA Flip/Flop Rule will be in effect. See inside back cover of this book.
  
- K. The umpire will be the official timekeeper. Games will last 55 minutes or 7 innings whichever comes first. When time runs out, the inning in progress will be completed. Ties will be played out in a one pitch format as described in Rule 17, Section 2 of the USSSA rulebook. A final inning is considered completed when the visiting team has completed batting and the home team is ahead. A new inning begins immediately after the third out of the previous inning is made. If a curfew stops a game before time runs out, the game will be completed at a later date, beginning at the point of suspension of play

with as close to the same personnel as possible. All players in the continued game must keep their original batting positions.

- L. No game shall be postponed except at the discretion of the umpire for reasons of severe weather or unsafe playing conditions unless the President of the association considers that there exists an emergency.
- M. If a game is suspended before four innings have been completed that game will be rescheduled for another date and shall be played from the start.
- N. Teams winning a game by forfeit have a right to the field for 45 minutes unless the forfeit results from a disbanded team. In this case, the association reserves the right to use the field to reschedule other games.
- O. No shoes with steel spikes will be allowed.
- P. Players may not leave gloves on the field or hang gloves on outside of fence during game.
- Q. A team receiving a forfeit from another team will get credit for a win by the score of 15 to 0.
- R. The determination of final league standings and associated trophies/awards will be made as follows:
  - 1. Won-loss records.
  - 2. If a tie exists, teams shall be ranked according to which team won in head to head competition.
  - 3. If a tie still exists, teams shall be ranked according to the fewest runs allowed for the league season.
  - 4. If a tie still exists, teams shall be ranked according to the most runs scored for the league season.
  - 5. Coin toss.
- S. The following chart lists the outs that will be charged per time through the batting order if a regular men's or women's team plays with or has to drop to a lesser number of players:

**IN THE CASE OF AN EJECTION IF NO SUBSTITUTE IS AVAILABLE THE GAME IS FORFEITED.**

Start With	Outs To Be Charged	Drop To	Outs To Be Charged
11	0	10	1
11	0	9	2
11	0	8	3
10	0	9	1
10	0	8	2
9	0	8	1
8	0	7	Forfeit

The following chart lists the outs that will be charged per time through the batting order if a coed team plays with or has to drop to a lesser number of players.

Start With	Outs To Be Charged	Drop To	Outs To Be Charged
12	0	10	2
12	0	9	3
12	0	8	4
10	0	9	1
10	0	8	2
9	0	8	1
8	0	Drop to less than eight - Forfeit	

If the game is started with less than ten players, late arriving players may be added up to ten.

- T. The team listed first on the league schedule for each game will be designated as the home team for that game.

- U. For regular season league games the third base bench will be assigned to the home team and the first base bench will be assigned to the visiting team.
  - V. Home Run limits (for league play) as follows will be applied:
    - Men's Rec I, II, III; Church I, Co-Ed I – 6 over the fence home runs per game.
    - All other Men's, Church, and Co-Ed divisions – 3 over the fence home runs per game.
- For all leagues, any fair ball hit over the fence in excess of the allowable number of home runs will be counted as outs.
- W. All league games will be played with one umpire.

#### **IV. PROTESTS**

- A. All protests will be presented for hearing before the Executive Board of the association.
- B. A protest must be filed with the association office within 24 hours after the completion of the game. Saturday and Sunday will not count in the time limit.
- C. The only protests that will be allowed will be those concerned with the eligibility of players, interpretation of rules, scorekeeping error, or shirt compliance.
- D. In case of protest, the burden of proof will rest with the manager protesting.
- E. Any protest of interpretation of rules must be made by the team manager to the umpire at the time of the play in question and must be followed by a written protest as outlined in the USSSA rule book and accompanied by a \$25.00 protest fee within 24 hours after the completion of the game. The umpire must register the protest and all pertinent facts concerning the disputed play, (i.e., where the ball was hit or thrown, players involved in the protest or any other related

information) on the score sheet. If the protest is upheld by the Executive Board the \$25.00 fee will be returned otherwise, it will be retained by the association.

## V. TEAM SIGN UP PROCEDURES FOR SPRING AND FALL LEAGUES

- A. An entry deadline meeting date and final money due date will be announced at the organizational meeting.
- B. Each team must pay at least a \$100.00 deposit (non-refundable) at the deadline meeting.
- C. Each team must turn in at least 10 Player Contracts with a fee of \$15.00 per contract at the deadline meeting. Teams not turning in 10 completely filled in contracts (must include signatures and Driver's License Numbers) will be placed in the top division of their respective league.
- D. After the original player contracts are turned in only 3 additional contracts may be turned in through the end of the second week of the season. Then only 3 additional contracts may be turned in during the third and fourth weeks of the season. From the fifth week until the end of the season additional contracts are unlimited. Due to the restrictions in the early weeks of the season, the association recommends that each team turn in as many contracts as possible at the deadline meeting.
- \*E. Each team will pay \$35.00 per scheduled game per season.
- F. Each team will be notified as soon as possible about the amount of the balance due that must be paid by the final money due date.
- G. Teams who turn in final monies after the set deadline will be assessed a penalty of 1 forfeit for every business day that the payment is late.
- \*H. **ASSA will not accept personal checks in payment of league fees, contract fees, or ball purchases. Only cashiers checks, money orders, debit cards, credit cards, official sponsor checks and cash**

**will be accepted. In the event of a returned sponsor check there will be a charge of \$30.00 per check.**

## **VI. LOCAL TOURNAMENTS AND PLAYOFFS**

- A. All games will be played under current USSSA rules.
- B. In order to be sanctioned by the association, a tournament must consist of at least eight (8) teams.
- \*C. Game balls will be purchased from ASSA.
- D. All protests shall be decided before the next pitch by the Tournament Director accompanied by a \$75.00 fee, at the time of the protest. Designated Managers only may protest on player eligibility or misinterpretation of rules. Burden of proof is the protesting manager's responsibility.
- E. All players must be able to produce valid ID with picture upon request of umpire or tournament official. Player in question must produce picture ID within three minutes, after which time the substitution rule goes into effect.
- F. In large tournaments it may be necessary to bring in out of town umpires. In lieu of paying mileage the out of town umpires will be paid the additional amount of one game.
- G. No infield practice at anytime.
- H. Team shirts must be of the same basic color with a unique number which is readily visible to the umpire.
- I. Game time is forfeit time. In case of a delay it is your responsibility to check with the tournament staff for the rescheduled time.

- J. Team should turn in line-up containing first and last names with uniform numbers of starting and potential substitutes to the umpire prior to game time.
- K. Coin flip will determine home team.
- L. Any player or coach ejected from a game during the tournament must leave the complex and will be suspended for no less than that team's next game. The Tournament Director may exercise his/her authority to lengthen the suspension in the event of flagrant or violent misconduct.
- M. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed in Abilene City Parks.
- N. Run rules will be at the discretion of the Tournament Director.
- O. Time limits will be at the discretion of the Tournament Director.
- P. Bats ejected from a game will be marked and kept at the Association Office and can be picked up after the team has been eliminated from the tournament.
- Q. Out of town teams must have proof of registration or travel permit.
- R. Complete tournament roster due prior to first game to the Tournament Director.
- \*S. All fliers and brackets must be approved by the ASSA Tournament Director prior to distribution.
- T. Official sanctioning body must be listed on flier.
- U. All regular league teams will be eligible for the post season playoffs.
- V. All ASSA sponsored tournaments of less than 25 teams, except State or NIT, will be played with 1 umpire.
- \*W. **ASSA will not accept personal checks in payment of tournament entry fees or ball purchases. Only cashiers checks, money orders,**

**debit cards, credit cards, official sponsor checks and cash will be accepted. In the event of a returned sponsor check there will be a charge of \$30.00 per check.**

## **VII. TOURNAMENT FIELD USE REGULATIONS**

Prospective sponsoring organizations may enter into a contractual agreement with the ASSA for use of the fields on dates when ASSA tournaments are not scheduled. Rights, obligations and duties of both the ASSA and a sponsoring organization with regard to any such tournament will be delineated in a uniform contract applicable to any prospective sponsoring organization.

## **VIII. SPECIAL RULES**

- A. Church Leagues:
1. Each team may have a maximum of three players who are not members of the church sponsoring the team. If a church team elects to use non-members, at least two of the non-members must be included in the contracts turned in at the deadline meeting.
  2. Church League games will be played on Monday nights.
  3. No player in the church leagues shall be required to play for the team of the church of which he is a member.
  4. Any team whose roster meets the criteria for a church team may request to play in the Rec leagues and be assured of an automatic berth to the USSSA Church State Tournament provided that that team plays in the Rec division of the appropriate qualifying tournament.
  5. Two churches may combine to form a single team, but may not have any players who are not members of the two churches. Any combining of churches to form a team must be approved by the ASSA Board of Directors.

- B. Co-Ed Leagues:
1. To start a game teams must have at least 8 players and a number of women equal to or greater than the number of men.
  2. At least 4 men must play at all times.
  3. Teams may use extra hitters; however, if extra hitters are used those hitters must be one (1) male and one (1) female.
  4. Women will hit an 11" ball and men will hit a 12" ball.
- C. Players and /or teams may be suspended for unauthorized use of playing fields.

(M) Denotes rule applicable to Men's League only.

(C) Denotes rule applicable to Church League only.

(W) Denotes rule applicable to Women's League only.

(CE) Denotes rule applicable to Co-Ed (Mixed) League only.

\* Changes since previous edition of rules.

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