



# POPSOFTBALL RULE BOOK

2010

## **POPSOFTBALL RULE BOOK**

**POPSOFTBALL LEAGUE** (40 & Over and 50 & Over) will play by the official rules of the Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA). Each and every team, manager, player, and umpire affiliated with the POPSOFTBALL LEAGUE shall be knowledgeable of and abide by the following **special** rules, which apply to our league.

### **1. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

- A.** The minimum age requirement for the 40 & Over League is 39. A player must be 40 years of age by December 31<sup>st</sup> of that playing season. Each team is required to have a minimum of sixteen Players.
- B.** The minimum age requirement for the 50 & Over League is 49. A player must be at least 50 by December 31<sup>st</sup> of that playing season. However, each team may have 3 players who are 48 by December 31<sup>st</sup> of that playing season. Each team is required to have a minimum of sixteen players.

### **2. RULES FOR PLAYERS SWITCHING TEAMS**

- A.** A player can ask to move from their current team to any other team in POPSOFTBALL, including from one division to another and from one league to another (e.g., from American to National, from 40 & Over to 50 & Over).
- B.** Player requests must be made by March 31<sup>st</sup> of the year they wish to switch.

- C. Player requests to leave a team will be granted on a first come, first served basis (as described below), and will only be considered if accepted by the manager of the team they request to go to.
  
- D. Each Manager must designate 3 impact players from their team, to limit losing important players. This must be done by emailing Keith Davidoff (keithdavidoff@aol.com), Andy Eisner (eisner.andrew@gmail.com), and Keith Pastuch ([commish@popsoftball.com](mailto:commish@popsoftball.com)) by March 1<sup>st</sup>.
  
- E.
  1. A team cannot lose more than 3 players in any consecutive 2-year period, including up to 2 impact players. Therefore, over any consecutive 2-year period, a team can lose at most: (1) 3 non-impact players, (2) 1 impact player and 2 non-impact players, or (3) 2 impact players and 1 non-impact player.
  
  2. No team can accept more than 1 impact player per year.
  
  3. If a team loses 3 players in any consecutive 2-year period, no requests from players to leave that team will be considered for the following 2 consecutive years.
  
- F. Process for Requests to Switch Teams:
  1. The requesting player will contact manager of team he wants to move to. If that manager agrees to take the requesting player, move to the next step.
  2. The requesting player will send an email with the following information included:

- a. The player's name
- b. The name of the team he wants to leave
- c. The name of the team he wants to join

The email must be sent to:

- a. Keith Davidoff ([keithdavidoff@aol.com](mailto:keithdavidoff@aol.com))
- b. Andy Eisner ([eisner.andrew@gmail.com](mailto:eisner.andrew@gmail.com))

The email must be copied to:

- a. Keith Pastuch ([commish@popsoftball.com](mailto:commish@popsoftball.com))
- b. The manager of his current team.
- c. The manager of the team he wants to join.

- G. The manager of the receiving team has 48 hours to respond to the email agreeing to accept the player on his team.
- H. The move will not be official until approved by the board. Keith Davidoff and Andy Eisner will track all player moves to ensure the above rules are followed, and will convey the Board's decision to all those involved.

**Note:** If no team wants a player, he gets put on a waiting list. If no one claims him, he gets a refund.

### **3. ROLE OF POPSOFTBALL LEAGUE DIRECTORS AT GAMES**

- A. League directors are responsible for the interpretation of POPSOFTBALL RULES only. If there is a discrepancy regarding the POPSOFTBALL RULES during a game, managers and umpires can ask for a rule clarification from the director. The director cannot change the umpire's call. After a rule has been clarified, the umpire will make the determination whether the call stays or changes.

Only the managers can talk to the director during the game.

#### **4. MANAGERS' RESPONSIBILITIES AT GAMES**

All managers (assistant managers a/o designated managers) and umpires will be responsible for discussing POPSTOFTBALL RULES before the game. This should also include ground rules, over throws in dead territory, extra bases, fielders running into dead territory with possession of the ball, and batted ball hitting fielder and rolling into dead territory, etc. Managers should bring the POPSOFTBALL RULE BOOK to each game.

#### **5. PLAYER CONDUCT**

A. All managers and players are expected to conduct themselves appropriately. This includes, but is not limited to: no taunting the other team and no arguing with umpires.

#### **B. NO TOLERANCE RULE**

If a manager, director, or umpire sees a player out of control he has the **OBLIGATION** to report it to the Commissioner and the Board. The league will then impose the following:

1. First Offence- 1 game suspension.
2. Second Offence- 3 game suspension.
3. Third Offence-Kicked out of the league.

#### **6. ALCOHOL**

Alcohol is **prohibited** at all fields before, during, and after all games. A player/players caught using alcohol will be

subject to suspension for a specified number of games at the discretion of the Commissioner and Board.

**7. PLAYING FIELDS (FIELD DIMENSIONS)**

**A.** Pitcher's mound is 50 feet from home plate.

**B.** Oceanside High School has base plugs at 60 feet. The bases will be placed on top of the base plugs for safety. All other fields will be 65 feet.

**C. SCORING LINE**

**1.** A straight line will be drawn from the left upper corner of home plate to the backstop.

**2.** For the runner to be called safe at home, any part of his body must cross the scoring line before the fielder touches home plate (not including the extension mat) while in possession of the ball.

**D. COMMITMENT LINE**

A commitment line will be marked perpendicular to the third base line and placed half way between the front of home plate and third base.

Once the runner's touches or crosses the commitment line, the runner is committed to advance to home plate.

If a runner "retreats" back across the commitment line toward third base, he will be declared out and the ball will remain live.

A runner is declared out at home if the fielder touches home plate (not including the extension mat) while in possession of the ball anytime after

the runner touches or crosses the commitment line and before he touches or crosses the scoring line; and the ball will remain live.

## **8. Homerun**

- A. A ball hit over any fence (in fair territory) is a homerun.
- B. There is a three over-the-fence homerun limit. Any over-the-fence homerun above the limit will be ruled a single. Runners on the base(s) will advance one base.
- C. There is no limit for inside-the-park homeruns.

## **9. FIELD-SPECIFIC RULES**

- A. Ground Rule (Oceanside H.S.)  
All grass is “live” on Oceanside High School field.
- B. Ground Rule Triple (Oceanside H.S.)  
If a ball enters the bushes (ivy) in right-center field or right field, the fielder **must** make an attempt to find the ball. If the ball is not visible to the fielder, he should immediately raise his hands. The ball is considered “dead” and a triple is awarded. If the ball is visible in the bushes (ivy), then the play is live.

## **10. EQUIPMENT/UNIFORMS**

- A. BATS  
Only single-wall bats are permitted. We will also follow the ASA Non-Approved Bat List.

If a player is caught using an illegal bat, he will be out for the game and receive one game suspension.

**B. BALLS**

Clincher gold softballs will be used (cork centered softballs).

**C. CLEATS**

Players may wear rubber cleats, sneakers, or turf cleats only (metal cleats are prohibited).

**D. BASES**

All managers should bring the bases, home plate, and home plate extension to each game.

**E. UNIFORMS**

POPSOFTBALL shirts should be worn during the games. If a player does not wear the POPSOFTBALL shirt in a game he should wear a matching team color shirt.

**11. BATTING PRACTICE**

A. Batting practice in the batter's box at Oceanside High School is **not permitted**. Batting practice is limited to first base or third base sides only.

B. Batting practice before any second game is **not permitted** at any field.

**12. GAME & TIME**

A. All games will consist of seven innings (unless stopped by the umpire). A game called due to darkness and/or inclement weather are at the umpire's discretion. If the inning is not completed, then the final score of the game will revert back to the last complete inning.

B. Four full innings constitutes a complete game during both regular and playoff games.

C. OCEANSIDE HIGH SCHOOL, BALDWIN PARK, COW MEADOW PARK, EISENHOWER, and NEWBRIDGE PARK (LIGHTED FIELDS)

Game length is one hour and fifteen minutes “**drop dead time**” (if it is a doubleheader). This means if the inning is not completed then the game will revert back to the last full inning completed. The clock starts after the first pitch of the game is pitched. The umpire will be responsible for keeping time.

NOTE: If there is only one game scheduled on any of the lighted fields, there will be no drop dead time.

D. BELLMORE JFK HIGH SCHOOL, BOARDMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, CHATTERTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (NON-LIGHTED FIELDS)

There is only one game played on these fields per night. The game will be played for seven innings (unless stopped at the umpire’s discretion), with no drop dead time.

E. MAXIMUM RUNS PER INNING

There is a maximum of eight runs per inning **except** for the last inning, which is unlimited.

### 13. PLAYERS

A. In the 40 & Over League ten defensive players are **required** to be on the field.

B. In the 50 & Over League eleven defensive players are **required** to be on the field.

**C. PENALTIES FOR TEAMS WHO DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH ROSTER PLAYER OR PLAYERS ON THE FIELD (REGULAR SEASON)**

1. If a team has only 7 players from its roster, it forfeits the game. A minimum of 8 roster players must be on the field for regulation games. Teams can borrow players as fill-ins from the league. The fill-in player MUST be a registered POPSOFTBALL player (for insurance reasons).
2. There are penalties for teams who use fill-in players.
3. If a team has 8 players from its roster and picks up 2 fill-in players from the league, those players will bat 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> in the batting order. The fill-in players can play any position except pitch. As a penalty, the team will start the second, fourth, and sixth innings with one out.
4. If a team has 8 players from its roster and must use 2 fill-in players from the opposing team, those players are selected by the opposing manager, can play any position except pitch and cannot bat. As a penalty, the team will start the second, fourth, and sixth innings with two outs.
5. If a team has 9 players from its roster and picks up 1 fill-in player from the league, that player will bat 10<sup>th</sup> in the batting order. The fill-in player can play any position except pitch. As a penalty, the team will start the second and fourth innings with one out.

6. If a team has 9 players from its roster and must use 1 fill-in player from the opposing team, that player will be selected by the opposing manager, can play any position except pitch and cannot bat. As a penalty, the team will start the second and fourth innings with two outs.
7. If the roster player or players show up late, there is no penalty from that point forward.

**NOTE:** The playoff penalties are similar to that of the regular season except fill-in players can only play specific positions. This playoff penalty rule will be discussed in detail with all managers prior to the playoffs.

The penalty for the 50 and Over Division is the same as above but will use eleven players as a guide.

**D. FORFEIT PENALTY**

Teams that forfeit during the regular season will be penalized for the first round of the playoffs. The penalized team will play with two outs in the first and third innings of the game.

The forfeited team will be required to pay a \$50 fine.

- E.** Teams are allowed free substitutions any time (EH/DH) if necessary).
- F.** If a player must leave the game for any reason before it is completed, his place in the batting order may be bypassed without penalty.

- G. A player is required to play 50% of his games in the regular season to be eligible to participate in the playoffs.

#### 14. PITCHING AND BATTING

##### A. BALL

A new ball will be distributed at the **top** and **bottom** if the **first inning**.

##### B. ARC

A legal pitch must have an arc of six to ten feet from the playing surface.

##### C. STRIKE ZONE

A pitched ball that lands on the plate (including the border) or plate extension is a strike.

**Note:** If a pitcher pitches the ball to home plate as if it were “fast pitch softball” the umpire should rule, “dead ball” and give the pitcher one warning. A call of “ball” will be awarded to the batter. If a pitcher pitches a ball to home plate a second time as if it were “fast pitch softball”, the umpire will rule, “dead ball” and remove the pitcher from the pitching position. The pitcher may remain in the game at a different position.

##### D. INTENTIONAL WALK

Intentional walks are permitted. The pitcher will tell the batter to take first base.

##### E. BALLS & STRIKE COUNT/OUTS

1. Each at bat starts with a 1 ball and 1 strike count.
2. A foul ball on the last strike is an out.

3. There are three outs per inning.
4. There is no discussion during the game about called balls and strikes.

**F. BATTING**

1. The batting order will include all players (continuous batting).
2. The rule concerning a foul tip caught by the catcher will fall under the ASA rules. Consult with the ASA Umpire or current ASA Rule Book for this ruling.

**15. BASERUNNING**

**A. COURTESY RUNNER**

The last batter-runner out or the last capable batter-runner out will be the courtesy runner.

- B.** Everything is a force play. However, the fielder has the option of tagging the runner except at home plate.

All bases should be thought of as a finish line. If the runner reaches the finish line before the ball is caught by a fielder while touching the base, he is safe - whether he is advancing to a base or going back to the base. He may also go two feet to the right or left of the base to avoid contact.

If the runner decides not to cross the plane of the base and stops in between the bases, the play remains live until either he is tagged or forced out trying to get to either base.

C. OVERRUNNING

1. Overrunning (straight through) the base you are **advancing to** or **returning from** is permitted.
2. If the runner makes an attempt to advance to the next base after overrunning a base, he will be subject to being put out (force out or tag play). This play is considered “live”.

D. FIRST BASE (Double Bag)

First base is a white and orange double bag (fair and foul territory). It is the runner's responsibility to avoid contact when going into first base. The fielder must touch the white bag and the runner must touch the orange bag; however, to avoid contact the fielder and the runner can switch bags.

E. SECOND & THIRD BASE (Single Bag)

Overrunning of second base and third base is permitted (just like first base). It is the runner's responsibility to avoid contact when going into second or third base; therefore, the runner must step approximately two feet to the left or right of the bag (or on the bag) to avoid contact. The runner is “out” if he runs more than two feet to the left or right of the base. This will be the umpire's judgment and cannot be protested.

F. HOMEPLATE

1. If there is a play at home plate, the fielder must touch (step on) the plate not including the extension mat. There is no tag play allowed at home plate. There will be a scoring line that the runner must cross

**before** the fielder with the ball in possession touches home plate to be “safe”.

**Situational Play:** A runner is on second base. A ball is hit into the outfield. The runner from second base is advancing towards third base. The outfielder throws the ball erratically to third base. The catcher leaves his position to back up the third basemen (no one is covering home plate). The third baseman missed the ball and the ball hits the fence on third base side. The ball is rolling between third base and home plate. The runner decides to advance to home plate while the catcher picks up the ball. Because the runner is running toward home plate, the catcher must either throw the ball home to a fielder covering home plate or run towards home plate and step on the plate himself. It is considered a play at the plate –it cannot be a tag play.

2. The only time the runner is permitted to touch home plate is to avoid contact with the fielder.

The first time a runner steps on home plate, the umpire will issue a “team warning”. A runner (from the warned team) that steps on home plate after the team has been warned will be ruled “out”.

#### **G. SLIDING & DIVING**

Sliding and diving to a base is **not permitted**. A base runner who slides or dives to a base will be ruled “out”.

If a player trips or falls down, he cannot touch the base with his hand(s). He must get up on both feet and step on the base.

NOTE: The umpire will determine if a player has slid or has fallen. This is the umpire's judgment call and cannot be protested.

## **H. CONTACT**

The base runner should make every attempt to avoid contact with the fielder. He can run two feet to the left and right of the base to do so.

1. **Avoidable Contact:** Base runner has time and opportunity to avoid contact but did not. Base runner is ruled **out**.
2. **Incidental Contact:** Fielder interferes with base runners path. The runner has no time and opportunity to avoid contact. Baserunner is ruled **safe**.

This is the umpire's judgment call and cannot be protested.