

**TRI COUNTY SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT ASSOCIATION  
RULES AND PROCEDURES – 2024**

**1. TOURNAMENT ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

- 1.1 The official name of the tournament shall be the “Tri County Softball Tournament”
- 1.2 Beginning in **2024**, the host park sequence shall be
  - Lanier
  - North Gwinnett
  - Buford
  - Mountain View
  - Archer
  - Grayson
  - Norcross
  - Shiloh
  - West Walton County
  - Peachtree Ridge
  - South/Central Walton
  - Mountain Park
  - Collins Hill
  - Duluth
  - Brookwood
  - Barrow County
  - South Gwinnett
  - Mill Creek
  - Dacula
- 1.3 If any other park joins the Tri county Association, their names will be placed at the bottom of the rotation. If more than one (1) park joins at the same time, a coin flip or lottery will be held to determine placement of the new members.

A park may host the Slow (Tee Ball and Pee Wee) and Fast Pitch (all other age divisions), or either, in their turn. If they are unable to host both, that portion shall be offered to the Tri County Membership by lottery. Only those parks that have participated for one (1) or more years will be eligible for the lottery. If, for any reason, a park is unable to host the tournament during their turn (either slow or fast pitch), they shall lose their turn and be placed at the bottom of the rotation.
- 1.4 The Director of Softball for the host park or his/her designee, shall serve as President of the Tri County Tournament Association. He or she will serve for one (1) year, during which their park hosts the tournament.
  - 1.4.1 The Tri County Softball Leadership Committee will consist of five (5) members. These five (5) members will include the director from the past two (2) Tri County host parks, current Tri County President, and the director from the future two (2) Tri County host parks.

- 1.5 The Tri County Association will hold its annual meeting the second Wednesday in January. All rule changes, etc. shall be decided by majority vote of the park's participation in each year's tournaments. Participation shall include, but not limited to, having a representative at each meeting concerning the tournament and two (2) consecutive years of Tri County Tournament play. Parks failing to participate in Tri County will be removed from the host park list. Each park shall cast one (1) vote. Any tie will be broken by the host park casting one (1) additional vote.
- 1.6 The requirements for hosting the tournament shall be as follows:
  - 1.6.1 There must be at least five (5) lighted fields in condition for tournament play.
  - 1.6.2 Games will not be canceled due to bad weather earlier than three (3) hours prior to game time.
  - 1.6.3 Tournament to be held over at least an 8 day span. Individual age groups may take less based on the number of teams entered.
- 1.7 The opening day activities shall include the playing of the National Anthem prior to the first game.
- 1.8 Pre Tri County will play pool play into a single elimination tournament bracket.
  - 1.8.1 A three (3) game tournament pool play format with single elimination bracket play.
    - A. Pools are randomly selected
    - B. If there is more than one all-star team in one park, they will not be placed in the same initial pool.
    - C. For brackets that have 10 or more teams, the teams will be split evenly into an "A" and a "B" bracket. If there are an odd number of total teams, the odd number of teams will be placed in the "B" bracket.
  - 1.8.2 Game times will be as follows: pool play and bracket games will be played at regulation time (75 min for 6U and 8U; 90 minutes for 10U and up). At the end of regulation time, pool games will finish the inning and can end in a tie.
  - 1.8.3 Home team during pool play will be determined by a coin flip. Home team during bracket play will be determined by seed. Highest seed is the home team.
  - 1.8.4 All games will finish the inning. Pool play games can end in a tie. Bracket play games will go to international tie-breakers.
  - 1.8.5 Pool seeding:
    - A. Best record
    - B. Head to Head (if applicable)
    - C. Run differential – essentially the total number of runs scored by each team in all games, minus the total number of runs scored by the team's opponent in all games
    - D. Runs allowed
    - E. Coin flip
- 1.9 Tri County will be a three game guarantee with teams seeded from the results of the Pre Tri County tournament. Teams not playing in the Pre Tri County will be automatically placed in the A bracket.

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  - D. Runs allowed
  - E. Coin flip
- 1.10 The HOME TEAM shall furnish a scorekeeper (age 16 or older) for each game. This is considered the OFFICIAL BOOK. In the event there is any question as to the score, location of runners or batting lineup, the OFFICIAL BOOK and the umpire are to look to this book and the scorekeeper for any clarification. The scorekeeper shall sit in the scorekeeper's box. The HOST Park shall provide an official (15 player) scorebook to be used for the recording of all games. The scorekeeper must enter the game data in this official scorebook. Each team shall furnish an adult scoreboard operator (16 or older). The scorekeepers shall be treated with the same respect as any other game official. The umpire may remove any fan displaying unsportsmanlike behavior towards a scorekeeper. Rosters should be on hand with the official book and shall only be inspected by an umpire or tournament director.
- 1.11 The use of any tobacco products is prohibited within the perimeter of the park's playing fields.
- 1.12 The entry fee for the Tri County Park will be \$225.00 for each team participating in the tournament. The entry fee for the Pre Tri County will be \$200.00 for each team participating in this tournament.
- 1.13 The host park and/or sanctioning organization are not liable for any injuries which occur during tournament play. Each local league (park) must furnish their own insurance coverage.
- 1.14 A team fee of \$175 per team for Tri County and \$175 for Pre Tri County will be assessed in lieu of collecting gate fees. Teams will not be allowed to play in the Tri County or Pre Tri County tournament until the team fee has been paid to the host park.
- 1.15 Team trophies will be given by the host association for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Trophies shall be reasonable size, minimum 22" for 1<sup>st</sup> place and 18" for 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Individual trophies will be given to each girl on each division's first and second place teams. A trophy, medallion, or plaque may be given for sportsmanship awards. Each girl who participates in the tournament will receive an all-star award (certificate, pin, etc.) stating that she is a member of an all-star team.
- 1.16 In case of lightning, umpires shall stop play. All players should leave the dugouts/playing area and seek safe shelter. Play can resume when there have been no lightning strikes for thirty (30) minutes.

1.17 The host park will designate a tournament Umpire in Chief who will be responsible for distributing copies of the rules to the umpires assigned, reviewing the rules with selected umpires, and ensuring compliance with these rules throughout the tournament.

If the host park is sharing responsibility for the slow or fast pitch tournament with another park, each park may choose the umpires for its portion of the tournament.

The host that provides the umpires shall pay for them.

Any call by an umpire that is solely a matter of judgment is final and not subject to protest. Only rule interpretation and player eligibility questions are subject to protest.

1.18 All protests concerning player eligibility or rule interpretation must be accompanied by a \$100.00 cash protest fee. This fee will be returned if the protest is upheld.

1.19 Player eligibility may be settled after a game if made during the game but must be settled before the game if protested before the start of play. Furnishing a birth certificate (original or copy) at time of protest shall be sufficient to rule a player eligible or not if age of player is protested. Eligibility questions for other than age will be ruled by a majority vote of the Directors of the parks participating in the tournament.

1.20 Rule interpretation protests will be made to the home plate umpire at the time of the occurrence, and before play is resumed. The home plate umpire will notify the official scorekeeper who will notify the Tournament Director or his/her designee. The protest committee will rule on the protest. The protest committee will be composed of three (3) members, including one (1) umpire not participating in the game, one (1) member of the host park, and one (1) individual not associated with either team, chosen at random. All committee rulings are final.

## 2. PLAYER AND TEAM ELIGIBILITY

2.1 Each player's age shall be the age she was as of December 31<sup>st</sup>, the year before the tournament. (Example: If the tournament was held in 2008 it would be the player's age on December 31, 2007 at 11:59:59 pm). This follows the USA Softball rule book for a player's age.

2.2 Eligible players shall be female only. A player's sex is determined by the sex noted on the certificate at birth.

2.3 The tournament shall be divided into the following age classifications: Tee Ball 6 years and younger  
Pee Wee 8 years and younger Minor 10 years and younger  
Major 12 years and younger  
Junior 14 years and younger  
Senior 18 years and younger

2.4 Any player may play in a higher age classification but may not play in a lower age group. Players may not play in more than one (1) age group during the tournament. Players must participate in the same age bracket in which they played during the regular recreational season. If a player has four (4) or more games in the older age group during the regular season, she will have to play in the older age group for the tournament.

2.5 Duplicate team roster for the Pre Tri County and Tri County tournaments must be submitted at the Player's Certification meeting. The roster will include the players name, address, age and date of birth. It shall also include the manager's name and 24 hour contact phone numbers. The team manager, his or her softball director and the tournament director will sign the roster for each team. One (1) copy of the roster with all signatures will be returned to the manager, and one (1) copy will go to the tournament director. Late certification will NOT be allowed. All teams provide plate umpires with a line-up for each game.

2.6 Teams will be limited to a maximum of fifteen (15) players. Teams must bat their entire roster, not including alternates. Slow pitch (TB/PW) teams will be limited to a maximum of 12 defensive players. Fast pitch teams will be limited to a maximum of 10 defensive players.

2.7 Four (4) adults per team will be allowed in the dugout. In Tee Ball and Pee Wee age groups, one (1) additional adult or assistant coach is permitted.

2.8 No player who resides in one league's district will be eligible to participate on another league's team unless she has written permission from the Director of the park in which she resides. This does not apply if she has played the entire regular season out of her district. A copy of this letter must be provided to the tournament director. All releases must be made before the certification meeting. Any team in violation of the above rule will be ineligible for all tournament play.

2.9 It is required that all teams entering the tournament be composed of "recreational league" level players who have participated in their respective parks regular season play. Travel teams and their members are ineligible to participate in the tournament. Participation on a church or intermural college team is not considered travel team play.

Any team that has played in a travel tournament will be ineligible for Pre Tri and Tri County tournaments.

Any player who has played on a park "recreational league" team and more than one (1) travel tournament during the regular spring season is not eligible to participate in the Pre Tri and Tri County tournaments. Park recreational league teams may; however, play other park's recreation league teams during the regular season without being considered a travel team.

Recreational league All-Star teams cannot have played in more than two (2) tournaments prior to the Tri County tournament. Both of these tournaments must be recreational/All-Star level tournaments only.

2.10 Teams will forfeit games in which an ineligible player participates; the definition of an ineligible player includes any player not on the approved tournament roster, any player that is not playing in the correct age division, any player that played their regular season at a different park, or any player that does not meet the eligibility criteria regarding travel ball participation. It is up to the Director at each park to ensure that only eligible players are included on the roster for Tri- County all-star tournaments.

2.11 A player may not participate if she is pregnant.

2.12 Any girl who is eighteen (18) years of younger as of December 31<sup>st</sup>, the year before the tournament (Example: if the tournament is held in 2008 it would be the players age on December 31, 2007 at 11:59:59 pm) but who has graduated from High School or was enrolled in a school during the regular season, may still participate in the tournament.

2.13 All-star practice may not begin until the completion of the “recreational league” season play, or May 1, whichever comes first.. Failure to comply will result in tournament disqualification. Single teams in a recreational league age group who elect to play all stars are exempt.

3. **EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS**

3.1 The host association(s) shall furnish ASA approved softballs for each division level as follows:  
Tee Ball, Pee Wee and Minor: 11-inch, yellow-red stitch, .47 core, .375 comp  
Major, Junior and Senior: 12-inch, yellow-red stitch, .47 core, .375 comp

3.2 All players must wear shoes and numbered jerseys. Team jerseys shall be the same color. Two (2) players on the same team cannot wear the same number.

3.3 Metal cleats are allowed ONLY for Junior and Senior divisions. No other age divisions may wear metal cleats. Players are allowed to wear stud earrings; however, they are not recommended. Dangling hoops, necklaces, bracelets and rings are prohibited. Bracelets may be taped down. All other jewelry is up to the discretion of the umpires.

3.4 The wearing of caps or visors and headbands will be optional for each player, not each team. If worn they may be mixed but must be worn properly. If one (1) type or more than one (1) type is worn, they all must be of the same color. Handkerchiefs DO NOT qualify as headbands and cannot be worn around the head or neck. Plastic visors are not allowed.

3.5 Batters may not sling the bat as they swing at the pitch. Batters will be warned once, after which, they will be called out for slinging the bat. When a batter is called out for slinging the bat, an immediate dead ball will be called, and all runners will be required to return to the base previously occupied at the time of the pitch.

3.6 All batters, including on deck batters and base runners in all age divisions, must wear a batting helmet. All age divisions are also required to have a facemask on all helmets that must be securely fastened.  
A team will be issued one (1) warning for the first violation. A second team violation will result in the player being declared out. A third team violation will result in the player being ejected from the game.

3.7 Tee Ball and Pee Wee catchers must wear an approved protective helmet and mask. It is strongly recommended, but not mandatory, that catchers also wear a chest protector.  
All fastpitch division catchers must wear an approved helmet and mask with throat guard, chest protector and shin guards.

3.8 Pitchers in all age divisions must wear a facemask and heart (chest) protection.

3.9 In all age groups, bats must meet the ASA/USA Softball requirements for legal bats. For 6U and 8U age groups; however, bats without the ASA or USA Softball stamps may be eligible as long as they meet the ASA/USA Softball specifications and must be of single-wall aluminum construction for the handle and barrel (end caps may be a material other than aluminum), with a barrel diameter of no more than 2 ¼ inches. Furthermore, for 6U & 8U, no high powered bats are allowed, including double-wall constructed bats or composite bats. This includes two piece bats (Half and Half construction where the barrel is aluminum and the handle is composite) or any bat containing composite materials. These bats are not allowed for safety reasons.

The penalty for using an illegal bat must be enforced during an at bat or after a hit, but before the next pitch is thrown. The batter will be called out and runners shall return to base prior to the batted ball and the umpire shall remove the bat from the game and issue a team warning. A second such offense shall cause the ejection of the manager.

#### 4. PLAYING FIELD SPECIFICATIONS

<u>SLOW PITCH</u>	<u>BASE DISTANCE</u>	<u>PITCHING DISTANCE</u>
6 & under	50 feet	25 feet
8 & under	50 feet	30 feet (coach)
<u>FAST PITCH</u>	<u>BASE DISTANCE</u>	<u>PITCHING DISTANCE</u>
8 & under	50 feet	30 feet (player)
10 & under	60 feet	35 feet
12 & under	60 feet	40 feet
14 & under	60 feet	43 feet

A 16-foot diameter circle will be drawn around the pitching rubber and used as outlined in the ASA Rule Book.

#### 5. GENERAL PLAYING RULES

##### 5.1 Slow Pitch Regulation Game

Age Division	Time Limit	# Innings	Run Limit
6 & under	75 minutes	5	5 runs first 4 innings, 10 runs 5 <sup>th</sup> and beyond
8 & under	75 minutes	6	3 runs first (player pitch) inning, 5 runs 2 <sup>nd</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup> innings and 10 runs 6 <sup>th</sup> and beyond. The final inning of the game must be completed unless the home team is ahead at their time of bat.

Championship games will have no time limit; mercy rule still applies.

##### 5.2 Fast Pitch Regulation Game

Age Division	Time limit	# Innings	Run Limit
10 & under	90 minutes	6	3 runs per inning for first three innings and 5 runs in the 4 <sup>th</sup> inning and beyond
12 & under	90 minutes	7	3 runs per inning for first three innings and 5 runs in the 4 <sup>th</sup> inning and beyond
14 & under	90 minutes	7	5 runs all innings
18 & under	90 minutes	7	5 runs all innings

An inning may not begin after the time limit specified.

Championship games will have no time limits; mercy rule still applies.

- 5.3 Fast pitch only – in the event of a tie after regulation time or innings, all extra innings will be played using the “International TieBreaker” rule.
- 5.4 If, after half a slow pitch game has been played, any team is ahead by sixteen (16) or more runs, the game will be called. Half a game will be:

6 & under	3 innings
8 & under	4 innings

If, after half a fast pitch game has been played, any team is ahead by eleven (11) or more runs, the game will be called. Half a game will be:

10 & under	4 innings
12 & under	5 innings
14 & under	5 innings
18 & under	5 innings

- 5.4.1 In the event a game has to be called due to rain or inclement weather at least half the game would have to be played to be considered a complete game. As in Rule 5.4 the following number of completed innings will determine if the game was a complete regulation game. If the game is called at some point beyond this the winner of the game will be determined by the score of the last complete inning. Example: if a 6 & under game was in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning and the game was called due to rain/weather the winner would be determined by the score at the end of the completed 4<sup>th</sup> inning.

6 & under	3 innings
8 & under	4 innings
10 & under	4 innings
12 & under	5 innings
14 & under	5 innings
18 & under	5 innings

USA Softball Rulebook reads: Games that are not considered regulation shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped.

- 5.5 Conferences will be limited to 3 per regulation game with 1 additional for extra innings. In 6U and 8U age divisions, conferences will be restricted to only one (1) per inning and are still limited to a total of 3 per regulation game.
- 5.6 The infield fly rule will not apply to Tee Ball, Pee Wee or Minor age divisions. It will, however, apply to all other age groups.
- 5.7 Fast pitch only: Stealing will be allowed per USA Softball Rule Book.
- 5.8 Sliding to reach a base safely will be allowed for all age groups.
- 5.9 At least eight (8) players are required to start a game. If a team has less than the required number of players available at the official start time (or within fifteen (15) minutes of the official start time of the first game scheduled for the day), the game will be forfeited. If a team

begins a game with the required number of players but loses a player due to injury or illness during the game, the game will not be forfeited.

- 5.10 An automatic out will be scored for any missing player(s) if the team plays with less than nine (9) players.
- 5.11 Unlimited defensive substitution will apply to all positions, except the pitcher position which will be governed by ASA rules concerning removal and re-entry. It is the responsibility of each individual park to ensure that all players receive playing time per their own park's rules.
- 5.12 All players on the roster will bat in rotating order. In case of illness or injury the head coach will have the option of A) player may be removed from the game without an out being taken but may not reenter the game at any point; B) team may choose to take an out for the injured or ill player, which would allow the player to reenter the game. Option B can only be used for one at bat. An offensive player, injured while a baserunner, will be replaced by the player whose name immediately precedes the injured player who is not on base. A maximum of ten (10) defensive players will be allowed for minor age groups and up.
- 5.13 Weekday games may begin at 6:00 pm. Saturday games may begin at 8:00 am and Sunday games may be considered if rainouts or other problems prevent adherence to the regular schedule.
- 5.14 Teams should plan to arrive thirty (30) minutes prior to their scheduled game time for warmups. NO on-field warm ups will be permitted. Teams who are not ready to play at their scheduled start time will risk forfeiture of the game.
- 5.15 Tri County as of 2004 will adopt a rule that states: Use of a double first base will be mandatory.
- 5.16 Rules not specifically covered here will automatically revert to the most recent USA Softball Rule Book.
- 5.17 Courtesy Runner – for this rule, the pitcher or catcher of record is the player physically playing the position when the third out was recorded in the prior inning. In the top of the first inning, the pitcher or catcher of record is the player identified on the lineup card given to the official scorekeeper prior to the start of the game.
  - 5.17.1 The team at bat may use a courtesy runner for 10U, 12U, 14U and 18U divisions (pitcher and/or catcher); 8U division (catcher only). Whenever they safely reach base prior to the next at bat in the batting order, the courtesy runner is determined as follows:

It is the player whose name immediately precedes the pitcher/catcher being courtesy run for. If that player is not available because she is currently on base, is the pitcher or catcher of record, or has already, in that inning, courtesy run for the other position, then that player is skipped and the courtesy runner becomes the next previous name on the lineup.

- 5.18 8U (Pee Wee) catcher assistance: For the 8U division of play, the team playing the field during a coach-pitch inning may station an additional adult (coach or parent) behind the catcher to assist the catcher in returning the ball to the coach pitching in that inning.

## 6. 6 & UNDER DIVISION RULES

- 6.1 A maximum of twelve (12) players can play defense
- 6.2 The playing field will be marked as follows:
  - A. There will be a clearly visible mark halfway between the bases.
  - B. There will be a sixteen (16) foot diameter pitcher's circle drawn on the infield. The center of the circle will be a point thirty-six (36) feet from home plate on a direct line between home and second base.
  - C. The pitching mark will be placed twenty-five (25) feet from home plate on a direct line between home plate and second base.
  - D. A semi-circular foul line will be drawn ten (10) feet from home plate between the first and third base foul lines.
- 6.3 Batting – each team must designate 50% of their batting lineup to only hit a pitched ball. Where a team has an odd number of batters the team must round up to the next whole number  
Example: 50% of 11 batters is 5.5 so this team would need to designate six (6) batters to hit a pitch only. A team with 13 batters would need to designate seven (7) batters.
- 6.4 Rules for batters with the tee: Each batter will receive three (3) pitches from her adult coach. An additional offensive coach will be permitted behind home plate to catch the pitched balls and return them to the pitching coach. A batter will be entitled to a total of five (5) opportunities to place the ball into fair play, of which the first three (3) must be by pitch. If the batter fails to hit the ball into fair territory on any of these three (3) pitches, she will be allowed to hit from a tee. If after five (5) opportunities, the batter has not hit a fair ball, the batter will be called out. Any motion toward the ball on the tee with the bat is considered a swing.
- 6.5 Rules for batters without the tee: Each batter will receive a total of five (5) pitches from her adult coach. Please note – the batter can swing at all 5 pitches and will only be out when the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch is missed. Because we are requiring these batters to hit off the pitch, unlimited fouls will be allowed on the last pitch (5<sup>th</sup> pitch) to these batters only. These batters will be marked in the official score book with a letter P to note the player can only hit pitched balls for the entire game. You cannot change who these players are once the first pitch is made to their team. If any injury or illness occurs to one of these players the team is not required to designate another pitch only batter.
- 6.6 If the ball stops inside the ten (10) foot area in front of home plate, it is a foul ball. If the ball is touched by a defensive player inside the ten (10) foot area, whether moving or not, it is foul. The ball is fair if any part of the ball touches the ten-foot line.
- 6.7 If the ball is hit, the coach who is pitching must immediately exit the playing field so as not to interfere with the defense and the umpire's line of sight. If the batted ball hits the pitching coach, the ball is dead and the batter must bat again without receiving a penalty for a swing. If the coach who is pitching interferes intentionally, the umpire shall issue a team warning. A second such offense, in the judgment of the umpire that interference was intentional, the batter shall be called out and the coach who is pitching shall be removed from pitching the rest of the game.
- 6.8 If the batter must hit from the tee, an offensive coach will adjust the tee for the batter, then move to the fence or backstop behind home plate. When the ball is hit off the tee, the coach will immediately remove the tee and bat.
- 6.9 Coaches will not be allowed to place the batter or tee in such a manner that will dictate the direction of the batted ball which includes touching the bat, any part of the player, or marking in

the dirt to direct the batted ball. (THIS RULE WILL APPLY IN PRE TRI AND TRI COUNTY TOURNAMENTS ONLY)

- 6.10 If the base runner has both feet past the halfway mark between the bases when the pitcher has control of the ball in the circle (umpire calls time) or time is called ahead of the lead runner when runners are no longer advancing, the base runner will be awarded the next base. If the base runner does not have both feet past the halfway mark, she must return to the base last touched.
- 6.11 There are no walks in this age division.
- 6.12 When a coach is pitching, the defensive player pitcher may stand anywhere within or directly behind the sixteen (16) foot pitching circle. Directly behind is defined as if there were two parallel lines running from the outside of the pitching circle and continuing toward the outfield. The player pitcher can stand anywhere between these two imaginary lines behind the pitching circle but no further than second base and the player/pitcher may not leave the infield until after the initial play has been made. She is the only player allowed in the circle prior to the ball being pitched.
- 6.13 No more than seven (7) defensive players will be allowed on the infield prior to the ball being hit. No defensive player on the infield may stand closer to the batter than the player pitcher. In no case must a defensive player move further back than the bases.
- 6.14 Two (2) defensive coaches will be allowed in the outfield at all times. They cannot touch the ball or enter the infield playing area. If a coach touches or is struck by a ball, or enters the infield, the base runners will be awarded an additional base after play has been stopped.
- 6.15 When the ball is in play, the umpire will call time out when either a) the player pitcher has full control of the ball and is inside the pitcher's circle with both feet; the pitcher is considered to be in the pitchers circle when both feet are on or within the lines and requests time; or b) when in the judgment of the umpire, all runners have stopped advancing. If the pitcher is attempting to make a play and runs through the circle, the umpire will not call time.
- 6.16 If a player hits a fly ball to the player pitcher and she catches it, it will be the umpire's judgment whether to call time.
- 6.17 Any time players remain in jeopardy of being put out, umpires have the authority to not call time.
- 6.18 If the batter hits a ground ball that is fielded by the player pitcher inside the circle and she makes no attempt to make a play at first, the batter will advance to first base. No other runners may advance unless forced.
- 6.19 Defensive players may not intentionally ground or roll the ball. The ball must be thrown overhand during live ball play. The umpire will not honor outs made by intentionally grounded or rolled balls.
- 6.20 One (1) defensive coach will be allowed outside the dugout within arm's reach of the dugout area.
- 6.21 The initial play from the pitcher to first base MUST be an overhand throw UNLESS IN THE JUDGMENT OF THE UMPIRE her natural motion to field the ball took her out of the circle.

- 6.22 Bat specifications: see section 3.9.
- 6.23 For an overthrow at 1st base only, the runner is allowed to advance one base at her own risk. Runner advancing beyond the base allowed, do so in jeopardy until reaching an unoccupied base, at which time a time out will be called and the runner will be placed on the correct base.

7. 8 & UNDER DIVISION RULES

- 7.1 A maximum of twelve (12) players can play defense.
- 7.2 The playing field will be clearly marked as follows:
  - A. There will be a clearly visible mark halfway between the bases.
  - B. There will be a sixteen (16) foot diameter pitchers circle drawn on the infield. The center of the circle will be a point thirty-six (36) feet from home plate on a direct line between home plate and second base.
  - C. There shall be a pitcher's rubber or pitching line at 30 feet for the player pitcher for the first inning of play and the coach pitcher for the remaining innings.
- 7.3 During coach pitch innings, each batter will receive a total of five (5) pitches or three (3) strikes from her adult coach. A foul ball will be considered a strike unless it's the third strike, in which case the batter receives an additional pitch. A batter will not be called out on strikes as long as she is fouling the ball.
- 7.4 If the ball is hit, the coach who is pitching must immediately exit the playing field so as not to interfere with the defense and the umpire's line of sight. If the batted ball hits the pitching coach, the ball is called dead, and the batter must bat again.
- 7.5 If a base runner is past the halfway mark between the bases when time is called, the base runner is awarded the next base. If the base runner is not halfway, she must return to the last touched base.
- 7.6 There are no walks in this age division.
- 7.7 When a coach is pitching, the defensive player pitcher may stand anywhere within or directly behind the sixteen (16) foot pitching circle. Directly behind is defined as if there were two parallel lines running from the outside of the pitching circle and continuing toward the outfield. The player pitcher can stand anywhere between these two imaginary lines behind the pitching circle. She is the only player allowed in the circle prior to the ball being pitched.
- 7.8 No more than seven (7) defensive players will be allowed on the infield (including the catcher) prior to the ball being hit. No defensive player on the infield may stand closer to the batter than the pitcher.
- 7.9 When the ball is in play, the umpire will call time when either a) the player pitcher has full control of the ball and is inside the pitcher's circle with both feet; the pitcher is considered to be in the pitchers circle when both feet are on or within the line and requests time, or b) when, in the judgment of the umpire, all runners have stopped advancing. If the pitcher is attempting to make a play and runs through the circle, the umpire will not call time.

- 7.10 Any time players remain in jeopardy of being put out, umpires have the authority of not calling time.
- 7.11 If a player hits a fly ball to the player/pitcher and she catches it, it will be the umpire's judgment to call time.
- 7.12 If the batter hits a ground ball, which is fielded by the player pitcher inside the circle and she makes no attempt to make a play at first, the batter will advance to first base. No other runners may advance unless forced.
- 7.13 One (1) defensive coach is allowed outside the dugout within arm's reach of the dugout area. No coach will be allowed inside the lines of fair play during defensive play.
- 7.14 Defensive players may not intentionally ground or roll the ball. The ball must be thrown overhand during live play. The umpire will not honor outs made by intentionally grounding or rolling the ball.
- 7.15 Run limits: the first inning will be a player pitch inning and will have a three (3) run limit. Innings 2-5 will have a five (5) run limit and subsequent innings will have a ten (10) run limit.
- 7.16 During player pitch, each batter will be allowed any number of pitches until she either has three (3) strikes against her (and will be scored a strikeout) or four (4) balls. After four balls (not four pitches) are thrown by the player pitcher, the coach pitcher, who should be ready to take the field and pitch, will take over pitching with the current strike count from the player pitcher. There will be no more than two pitches from the coach pitcher and the batter must hit one of those two pitches or she will be called out. If the coach takes over the pitching with two strikes from the pitcher, a missed swing, even on the first pitch, will count as the third strike and the batter will be out. Endless foul balls will be in effect; therefore the batter will continue to bat with a coach pitcher as long as she fouls off the third strike.
  - 7.16.1 All USA Softball rules will apply to the catcher as a player of the game
  - 7.16.2 The batter may not advance on a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike
  - 7.16.3 There is no stealing even with the player pitcher
  - 7.16.4 A batter hit by pitch during player pitch innings will be given first base if in the judgment of the umpire the player either made an effort to avoid the pitch or was unable to avoid the pitch. Example: On a rolling ball that hits the batter and in the judgment by the umpire, they made no effort to avoid being hit by the pitch, will not be awarded first base.
- 7.17 Bat specifications: see section 3.9.
- 7.18 All 8U teams must have a player catcher for all innings of play.

## 8. 10 & UNDER DIVISION RULES

- 8.1 Stealing of home is allowed. Whether passed ball or delayed.
- 8.2 A maximum of one base can be stolen by each runner per pitch (no additional advance on an overthrow). Runners advancing beyond the base are allowed to do so in jeopardy until reaching

an unoccupied base, at which time a time out will be called and the runner(s) will be placed on the correct base.

- 8.3 The batter may not advance on a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
- 8.4 There is no infield-fly rule.
- 8.5 Batter runner may advance to second base as long as second base is not legally occupied. No other runner may advance more than one base on a walk. Runners advancing beyond the base are allowed to do so in jeopardy until reaching an unoccupied base, at which time a time out will be called and the runner(s) will be placed on the correct base.

## 9. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS, COACHES AND SPECTATORS

- 9.1 Code of Conduct Policy: it is strictly against the policy of Tri County Softball for any person, either as a participant, coach or a spectator to engage in arguments, to use abusive language, to harass or make any threatening gestures towards umpires, coaches, players or league officials or to exhibit any behavior not keeping with the general intention of this association. Failure to abide by these policies will result in game suspensions and/or removal from the park.  
Any further incidents may result in permanent suspension from Tri County Softball. Any players, coaches, parents or umpires caught fighting or found consuming any controlled substance will be suspended from participation for an amount of time to be determined by the Tri County Board or Leadership Committee.
- 9.2 Player, coach and spectator ejections:
  - 1) First offense: If a manager, assistant coach, player or spectator is ejected from a game, they shall be suspended for the next regularly scheduled game.
  - 2) Second offense: If a manager, assistant coach, player or spectator is ejected from two (2) games in the same tournament, they shall be suspended for the remainder of the tournament.
  - 3) Appeal process: Upon written request, the person so ejected shall meet with the Tri-County board (or Leadership Committee) to review said violation(s) and to determine if the suspension should be upheld.