

Rule Book

howardpalmetto.com

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PREAMBLE

Howard Palmetto Baseball Softball Association (HPBSA) is committed to providing community recreational softball. All children are welcome and encouraged to play regardless of their experience or level of skill. HPBSA is a volunteer not-for-profit organization in operation since 1962. We look forward to another year of continued success, as we share the ideals of good sportsmanship and fair play with another generation of kids. Many rules have been modified in a continuing effort to make the playing environment competitive, enjoyable, and safe.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Position	Email
President	president@howardpalmetto.com
Immediate Past President	pastpresident@howardpalmetto.com
Registrar	registrar@howardpalmetto.com
Treasurer	treasurer@howardpalmetto.com
Softball Commissioner	softball@howardpalmetto.com
Umpires Softball Division	softballumpires@howardpalmetto.com
Softball I VP 8U	Softball1VP@howardpalmetto.com
Softball II VP 10U	Softball2VP@howardpalmetto.com
Softball III VP 11+Over	Softball3VP@howardpalmetto.com

Individual names and phone numbers are available on the league website; howardpalmetto.com

INTRODUCTION

The President, Softball Commissioners, and Immediate Past President are charged with the full responsibility and total authority of league play. Each manager shall acquaint the players, coaches, sponsors, parents, spectators, etc. with the rules by which our league will operate. Ignorance shall not be accepted as an excuse for any violation of the Official USSSA Rules, or the Howard-Palmetto Baseball-Softball Association Rules.

RULE 1: REGISTRATION

The League Commissioners will evaluate the number of fields available to determine the number of players that each division can accommodate. Players who have registered in the previous year in the league will have priority in being assigned to teams; said priority expires on the last day of pre-registration. Extra players will be placed on the waitlist based on their date of registration (last to register will be first to be placed on waitlist). Players may be moved by the League to upper or lower divisions based on skill level and number of registered players in each division. Registration fees are refundable prior to each division's draft. Once the draft has taken place full refunds are no longer available.

RULE 2: SOFTBALL DIVISIONS

The league will be divided into divisions according to age as follows:

8 & Under **Softball I** \
10 & Under **Softball II** \ **Age of player as**
11 & Over **Softball III** / **of September 1st**

If there are enough players 13 years old and over for a Softball IV division, then we will split the divisions as follows (age as of September 1st):
12 & Under **Softball III**
13 & Over **Softball IV**

If there are not enough players for a Softball IV division, then the age limit for Softball III will be 14 years old as of September 1st.

All children must play in the division determined by the above chart. Exceptions to this rule will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the HPBSA Division Vice-Presidents and Commissioner.

RULE 3: PLAYER RATINGS

1. **New Players and Returning Players** - All girls will be evaluated by the appropriate Division Vice President with the assistance of the league Commissioner. All managers of record at the time of evaluation must be notified of the time and place of the evaluations. Players will receive a rating for draft purposes.

   (a) In SOFTBALL, new applicants will be rated in all categories. SOFTBALL - All players in all divisions shall attend an evaluation prior to the draft, players will not be officially re-rated in the rating section for the draft. In Divisions II & III , new and returning players wishing to PITCH must be evaluated prior to the draft. In Divisions III, new and returning players wishing to CATCH must be evaluated prior to the draft.

   Rating Format

   (a) INFORMATION SECTION

   1. Player's name.
   2. Date of birth.
   3. Age on September 1st
   4. Grade.

   (b) RATING SECTION

   (1) SOFTBALL

   a. Offense: Numerical grades to be compiled as follows:
      (1) Batting: 1 – 10
      (2) Power: 0 – 2
   b. Defense: numerical grades to be compiled as follows:
      (1) Fielding: 1 – 7
      (2) Throwing Speed: 1 – 5
   c. Other: numerical grades to be compiled as follows:
      (1) Base running: 1 – 5

   d. TOTAL POINTS: 4 - 29

   After the SOFTBALL III ratings are completed, the Softball I I Vice President will establish the scales for SOFTBALL I I ratings based upon his/her judgment (in coordination with the Softball Commissioner and Softball III managers) as to where the highest rated Softball III players would fit in the Softball IV ratings. The same process will be used for Division I.

2. Player ratings will be based on a bell curve in each of the offensive, defensive and general categories. For example, in baseball, the BEST batter or hitters would be given a numerical grade of 8-10; all others within that division would be evaluated based on that player's abilities and graded accordingly. Each of the other categories, power, fielding, throwing, base running and softball knowledge, will be evaluated based on the best player at that skill.

3. **Pitching** - All Softball II and above players will be rated in pitching prior to the draft. Their pitching skills will be evaluated and given a score from 1 to 6 (highest rating). If such a player or his parents decline this request to be so rated, the player will automatically be considered as a "NO PITCH" at the coming draft.

4. **Catching** –Softball III players who are catchers will be evaluated and given a score from 1 to 6 (highest rating).

5. Prior to the draft of teams for the new season, each Division Vice President will collate all results in their respective division for each player. This overall score (TOTAL POINTS) from the evaluation form Rating Section, along with the Information Section, will be made available to all managers in the division at least one (1) day prior to the draft.

6. The Division Vice President will indicate on the evaluation form those players who played in the league during the previous season.

RULE 4: THE DRAFT

1. All divisions will conduct a draft. Each manager or appointed representative should be present at the draft. The Division Vice President, Commissioner or designated league representative may select teams in the absence of a manager or representative. No team will be selected if a manager has not been assigned to it. If there is an insufficient number of managers by the final date for drafting (as designated by the League Commissioner), the last registered players will be placed in the Player Pool. NOTE: Only one (1) representative shall be present per team.

2. **Rules of the Draft:**

(a) No individual may manage more than one team or be a coach who in actuality is managing said team unless prior approval is received from the Executive Committee.

(b) The daughters, or family related members (sisters) of managers are restricted to selection by their parent or relative. These players cannot be chosen by another manager without the approval of the relative-manager.

(c) No special requests may be initiated on the night of the draft.

(d) Co-managers are not permitted under any circumstances. However, a Manager may declare that they will coach with an Assistant Coach ahead of the draft. The Assistant Coach's child must be drafted by that Manager in the appropriate round per their rating. If both the Manager and Assistant Coach's children are rated as first round draft picks, then that team does not get a third-round pick and must pick two players in the 6th round.

The Softball Commissioner may choose to strike the draft rule permitting the pre-selection of three, four or five players and return back to a traditional draft at any point by requesting a revision to the Rules Committee.

Each Manager may pre-select three, four or five players (inclusive of the Manager's daughter and Assistant Manager's daughter, if applicable). These players are automatically drafted to the Manager's team and considered first-round players. Should a Manager pre-select players, they will not be eligible to make a selection again until three rounds after their number of pre-selected players (3 pre-selections drafts again in the 7th round, 4 pre-selections drafts again in the 8th round, 5 pre-selections drafts again in the 9th round).

Beginning in the first round where the Manager is allowed to draft again, the Manager must select two players each round until their team is back on track. Example: You pre-select 4 players and did not pick in the 5th, 6th and 7th rounds. In the 8th, 9th and 10th you would pick two players each.

Should a Manager pre-select a player that is rated as a 1st round pick relative to the number of teams in the division, then this manager will be assigned a draft pick based on this slotting.

If in the judgement of the Division Vice President or the Softball Commissioner that the players being kept in the 3rd, 4th or 5th spots are lower tier or beginning skill level players, the penalty clause of the three, four or five players pre-selected may be waived.

(e) Anyone choosing to coach in a division in which they have a child playing must coach on that child's team.

(f) It is the Division Vice President's duty to notify the managers of any injuries reported to him/her prior to the draft.

(g) Draft numbers will be selected individually by managers during a blind drawing on the day of the draft. DRAFT NUMBERS CANNOT BE TRADED. The draft will be started by the manager who drew "1" and will move in sequence to the highest number in the draft. The second round will start with the highest number in the draft working backwards to number "1". The process will continue until the draft is completed. In an eleven (11) player and thirteen (13) player draft, the order of the last round will be reversed.

(h) The first round draft in all divisions, except Softball I will be for pitchers who must come from the isolated list. (NOTE: The pitching list may be waived only by a unanimous vote of the Managers, subject to the approval of the League Commissioner, or their representative and the respective Division Vice President.) The Division Vice President will isolate the top rated pitchers in the division. All "4", "5" and "6" rated pitchers will be on the pitching list, regardless of the number of teams in the division. In the event there are not enough "4", "5" and "6" rated pitchers for all teams to make a selection from the pitching list, the "3" rated pitchers will be added to this list. If any of these pitchers is designated as a "1-inning" pitcher, they will be identified as such and moved to the bottom of the pitchers list, but not removed from the list and are available to be selected in the first round. Any manager's child who is on this isolated list as a "3-inning" pitcher must be drafted in the first round by that manager. If any manager's child is isolated as a "1-inning" pitcher, they will NOT be required to be drafted in the 1st round, but they will be required to be selected in the next available round. This will be the 2nd round unless there are combined divisions in which case the next available round may be later (see Rule 4.3 below).

(i) All Managers whose child is listed on the isolated pitching list will be assigned a pick in the draft relative to the pitching and overall rating along with inning designation of his child before the drawing of draft numbers and in a sequence as follows:

- **I.** All players listed on the isolated pitching list will be sorted by pitching inning designation (either 3 or 1-inning).
- **II.** Within each group, the players will be sorted by pitching rating (6, 5, 4 and if necessary, 3).
- **III.** Within each of the pitching ratings the players will be sorted by overall rating, highest to lowest. (Theoretically this is the sequence of the first round of a draft.)
- **IV.** Managers with a child on the isolated pitching list will then be assigned their draft pick number according to the placement of their child on the list. If a manager's child is on the isolated list but their rating places them below the number of teams in the draft, they will automatically pick last in the first round (or just before any manager(s) with a 1-inning pitcher).
- **V.** Any manager with a child in the "1-inning" pitchers group will be given the last pick of the pitching round. If there is more than one manager with a "1-inning" pitcher, the highest pitching rating then overall rating will be last followed by the next highest and so on.
- **VI.** Should there be a tie among players, the manager will draw from the draft pick numbers of those players tied with his/her child.

(j) If there are two siblings or family members that are isolated in the draft and must be placed on the same team and both players have each received pitching rankings of a "6" or a "5", then the following conditions will be made in order to maintain the competitive balance of the division:

I. The second sibling or family member to be drafted must be immediately selected in the first round for which his age group is available regardless of whether there are players available with a higher overall ranking.

II. Additional restrictions and limitations on the number of pitches and/or the number of innings the two players can pitch will be made. The specific restrictions and limitations are set forth in Rule 17 – Pitching Regulations. Note: The restrictions and limitations regarding the number of pitches and/or the number of innings are subject to waiver by the Division Vice President and League Commissioner and if the managers of the division agree to the waiver by majority vote. Any proposed waiver of the restrictions and limitations and the vote by the managers must take place

prior to the blind drawing determining the draft order of the teams.

(k) For Softball I, the first round of the draft will not be for pitching. If a manager's child is rated as a 1st round pick relative to the number of teams in the division, then this manager will be assigned a draft pick based on this slotting. For example, if there are eight teams, and the child is one of the top eight (8) rated players (including ties), the child must be the manager's first pick in the first round. The manager will be assigned a draft number by the Division Vice President identical to the position of his/her child on the draft list. For example, if the child were the fourth (4) highest rated player on the draft list, the manager will draft in the fourth (4) position. If the manager's child is tied with one or more other players, the Manager shall select his/her position from a sequence of selections equal to the number of players in the tied spots by blind drawing. For example, if the child and another player are tied for the fourth (4) best rating, then the manager will pick from either the fourth or fifth spots. If two or more Manager's children are tied for the last rating in the first round, they will all be drafted in the first round.

(l) Managers with a child not on an isolated pitching list or designated as a first round pick may select their child at any time, but they may not choose a player with a rating equal to or lower than their child until they have selected their child. For example, a manager's child is classified with a rating of "12". In each round of the draft they may choose any player with a rating higher than "12" or their own child, but they cannot select a "12" or lower rated player until after they have selected their child.

(m) All teams will be restricted to a maximum of twelve (12) players per team in Softball I & II, and eleven (11) in all other divisions at the time of the draft. An additional player can be added to any team with the permission of the Manager, Division Vice President, and League Commissioner.

(n) Trades between managers are permitted with prior approval of the Division Vice President and League Commissioner or his delegate. Coaches or representatives are not permitted to participate in player trades. All trades must be concluded no later than one (l) hour following the completion of the draft. No manager may participate in a trade once he/she has left the draft meeting. Trades beyond that time are prohibited except in special instances that have been granted by the prior approval of the League Commissioner.

(o) Managers must contact players selected by them within 48 hours following the draft. Players refusing to play for the manager who selects them in the draft will be dropped from the Baseball-Softball Association roster. If possible, a player with a similar numerical grade will be assigned to the manager by the Division Vice President, after the approval of the League Commissioner.

(p) Any restrictions or representations relating to the pitching limitations on a player (i.e. limited pitch count or limited number of innings pitched) made prior to the draft will be strictly enforced. Penalty: Team will forfeit any game where the restriction was violated.

(q) In SOFTBALL III , if there are enough pitchers rated "3" or above for every team to have two pitchers there will be two pitching rounds.

(r) In SOFTBALL III , if there are enough catchers rated "3" or above, to at least equal the number of teams, then there will be a catchers round. In the catchers round, only the draft order will be inverted. This will be done only if there are two (2) pitching rounds.

RULE 5: PLAYER POOL

Those players registering late and extra players from the initial registration period will be placed in a pool maintained by the Vice President of each division.

1. The Registrar shall notify the appropriate Division Vice President as new players are registered, and the Vice President shall evaluate these players as soon as possible.
2. The names of the players in the pool, and their numerical grades, will be strictly confidential and shall not be made available to managers and/or coaches until a player is placed on a team.
3. The pool players will be evaluated separately from those players on the active players list.
4. Players may be assigned to teams with vacancies by the Division Vice President after approval by the

League Commissioner. All player assignments must be immediately communicated to the applicable division managers by the Vice President when a decision has been made about any player.

5. Such assignments are to be premised upon the numerical grade of the player being replaced and the numerical grade and date of registration of the player being assigned.

6. All decisions of the Division Vice President and League Commissioner are final.

RULE 6: STATUS OF PLAYERS

1. No manager or coach will be permitted to drop a player from a roster under any circumstances without prior approval of the Division Vice President and the League Commissioner. Repeated absences from games or practices without a legitimate excuse, or a serious behavior problem, is sufficient cause for a manager to request that a player be dropped from the team roster. In order to drop such a player, however, both the player and his parents must have been warned about the possible consequence by both the manager and the Division Vice President. If the warning does not result in an adequate improvement in the player's attendance and/or behavior, the manager may request a decision from the Disciplinary Review Committee. The manager must also notify the parents that he/she is initiating such a request. Subsequently, the Division Vice President must personally inform the parents as to the decision of the Committee.

2. Players who drop out will not be allowed to play the following season unless exempted by the Disciplinary Review Committee or Commissioner based on extraordinary circumstances. The Registrar will be notified accordingly.

RULE 7: PRACTICES

1. It will be the policy of the Howard Palmetto Baseball-Softball Association to discourage daily mandatory practices. Up to three practices per week prior to the start of the season and one or two practices per week once the games commence would be considered reasonable. Managers must meet with the parents at the start of the season to discuss mutual expectations and develop a cooperative spirit. Teams must be ready to take the field, under proper supervision by a manager or a coach, in order to utilize these facilities. All fields will be policed for trash following practice. Utilization of fields is a privilege and can be taken away.

2. No practices will be allowed on fields or in areas that interfere with or cause a possible danger to participants in an official game in progress and/or the spectators attending that game. The umpire and/or league official will be responsible for determining the possible danger and taking the necessary action to remedy the problem. If a manager or coach refuses to comply with a request from an authorized official, he will be subject to action by the Disciplinary Review Committee.

3. At all Parks where games are being played, for 1 hour prior to scheduled league baseball games, teams scheduled to play will have priority for the use of the batting cages. If there are more teams scheduled to play games then there are cages at the particular park, managers and coaches shall share the cages with all teams scheduled to play games so that every player has an opportunity to participate in batting practice prior to their scheduled game. Managers and/or coaches who do not cooperate and share the batting cages with other teams scheduled to play a game shall be reported to the Division Vice President and the League Commissioner.

4. There shall be no practice scheduled during official league events .

RULE 8: RULES GOVERNING PLAY

The Howard-Palmetto Baseball-Softball Association Rules along with the USSSA Softball Rules (provided said rules are not at variance with any HPBSA Rules) will govern play for all HPBSA divisions.

RULE 9: THE PLAYING FIELD

1. The pitching distances and the distances between bases for each division are as follows:

Division	Mound to Plate (ft)	Bases (ft)
Softball I	35’	50’
Softball II	35’	60’
Softball III	40’	60’

2. Written description of ground rules affecting play at all softball fields shall be drafted by the League Commissioner and Chief of Umpires and distributed to each Division Vice President.

3. As per County rules and regulations, “Hit down drills” (hitting balls into any fence) are not permitted with any ball other than a tennis or soft rubber ball. Violation of this rule could result in action by the disciplinary committee.

4. The home team will occupy the third base dugout or bench at all fields.

5. The playability of the field for a game shall be decided by the Park Personnel in conjunction with the Umpire, League Commissioner, and/or league representative.

6. If any base or pitcher’s plate is discovered to have been incorrectly placed during the course of a game, it shall immediately be corrected and play will continue. No parts of the game will be replayed because of such error.

7. A “Safety Base” will be used at first base to prevent collisions between base runner and fielders for all Softball I and II games. If a safety base is not available for a game, the game will be played using a standard base.

RULE 10: UMPIRES

1. The umpires are the representatives of the league and as such are authorized and required to enforce all playing rules by which our league will operate.

2. There shall be no appeal from any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he/she was not correct in his/her conclusion as to whether a batted ball was fair or foul, a base runner safe or out, a pitched ball a strike or ball or any other play involving accuracy or judgment, and no decision rendered by any umpire shall be reversed except that he/she be convinced it is in violation of a rule.

3. In all divisions, umpires are required to obtain an official game day lineup sheet from each team which identifies all of the players present for the game and shall submit the lineups to the concession stand. The Division Vice President is expected to pick up the lineups and review them to ensure that all managers and players are complying with the league’s attendance rules.

RULE 11: PROTESTS

1. A protest can only be lodged regarding a violation of the playing rules in use during the current season. No protest shall be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire.

2. Only the manager or acting manager is allowed to register a protest on the field of play. The umpire in

charge must be notified immediately of the protest. Such notification must be delivered to him/her prior to the next pitch being thrown in the game. If this does not occur, the protest will not be allowed. If there is a protest on the last play of the game, the protest must be lodged immediately.

3. The protesting team's scorekeeper shall indicate the exact position of the game (i.e., number of outs, players on base, next batter, time of protest, etc.).
4. At the time the umpire-in-charge is advised of the protest, he/she must immediately advise the opposing manager, as well as the scorekeepers, that the game is being played under protest. The Division VP must be notified of a game in protest before the next pitch is thrown.
5. The umpire will suspend the game time clock during the notification and recording of a protest.
6. After the completion of a protested game, the protesting manager must put in writing the rule and section under protest as well as all the facts and exact conditions at the time of the protest. This written protest must be delivered to a member of the Protest Committee who shall be the League Commissioner (Chairperson), the Division Vice President, and the Rules Committee Chair not later than 48 hours after the completion of the protested game. If any of the Committee members is directly involved in the protest, the League President shall be substituted as the third member of the Committee. A protest fee of $100.00 must be sent to the Division VP within 48 hours after the completion of the protested game. This fee will be refunded if the protest is upheld; if not, the fee will go into the league's general fund.
7. The Protest Committee will notify the opposing manager and the umpire-in-charge of the game within 72 hours of the filed protest. The Committee will request from these individuals, within 72 hours after notification of filed protest, a written statement explaining their position and a summary of the protest as they saw it.
8. All decisions of the Protest Committee will be final. No further discussion will be permitted after the decision is rendered. The Committee has the authority to call before them any individuals they feel can add information to assist the Committee in arriving at a decision.
9. The League Commissioner has the right to discipline any manager or acting manager who protests in an indiscriminate manner.
10. If the Protest Committee finds that a ruling in favor of the protest would not have made a difference in the outcome of the game, IT MAY DENY THE PROTEST.
11. If the protest is upheld, the Protest Committee will determine at what point play will resume. When the protested game is rescheduled, the lineups and substitutions will be subject to the same rules as a suspended game.
12. A protest of any violation of the Baseball-Softball Association rules governing player eligibility may be filed by any registered manager or coach of a bona fide Baseball-Softball Association team. An eligibility protest of this type shall apply only to a player not properly registered, a player registered with more than one team, or a player not meeting the division's requirements.
13. To handle protests that may occur during play-off, league championship or tournament games, the respective Commissioner may appoint a Protest Committee to be present at the field to resolve on the spot, any protests that may occur.

RULE 12: CONDUCT

The Howard Palmetto Baseball-Softball Association is committed to creating and maintaining an environment based on principles of sportsmanship and fair play and it will not tolerate conduct on the part of its managers, coaches, spectators and/or players which it deems to be contrary to those principles. Accordingly, the Association has established and will strictly enforce the following Rules of Conduct.

1. A Disciplinary Review Committee will be established to consist of the President (Chairperson), League Commissioner and the Division Vice President of the division involved in the disciplinary action. The

Committee will act on suspensions and review possible disciplinary actions against managers, coaches, and players. The Committee may appoint a member or members of the League to said Committee as needed in order to establish an equitable decision on the matter.

2. **Managers and Coaches** – During a game, a team is limited to one manager and three coaches (including the scorekeeper). All managers and coaches must remain in the dugout except for the purpose of coaching first or third base. All managers and coaches must stay off the playing field and must remain behind the out-of-play line. EXCEPTION: Softball I defensive coaches allowed behind the outfielders. Managers and/or coaches who violate this rule may receive one warning and upon a second violation may be ejected from the game. The team manager or acting manager is the only team representative who is permitted to approach an umpire to contest any ruling. Managers and/or coaches who violate this rule shall be ejected from the game. At the discretion of the umpire, any manager or coach who demonstrates unsportsmanlike conduct may be immediately ejected from the game or will receive one warning, and upon the second violation, shall be ejected from the game. If any ejection occurs during the last inning of any game, the ejection shall automatically also be effective for the next succeeding game scheduled for that individual's team. Unsportsmanlike conduct will include, but not be limited to, the use of profanity, the continued harassment of a player, umpire, spectator, or league official. The Association strictly prohibits managers and coaches from using physical contact as a means of disciplining or addressing a player, umpire, spectator or league official. A manager or coach who violates this rule shall be suspended from all Association activities for a minimum of two weeks subject to further action and/or review by the Disciplinary Review Committee. All ejections will be made by the umpire. Any coach or manager ejected two (2) times during any one playing season is automatically suspended from league participation, pending action by the Disciplinary Review Committee. All ejections of managers or coaches will be reviewed by the Disciplinary Review Committee to determine if any further disciplinary action is warranted and the nature thereof. Smoking is not permitted on any portion of the playing field and dugout during league and tournament games. Managers and coaches must wear proper attire while on the field. They are encouraged to wear the shirts issued to them by the league. All equipment must also be in the dugout.

3. **Players** - All players should be warned by the manager that ejection is possible if they intentionally throw batting helmets or bats. The use of profanity by players under any circumstances may be cause for immediate ejection. Players exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct will be subject to immediate ejection from the game. If such conduct occurs after the completion of a game, but before a player has left the playing field or the immediate area of the field including the stands, the umpires in their judgment are authorized to eject such players for the next scheduled game for that player's team. If any ejection occurs during the last inning of any game, the ejection shall be effective for the next succeeding game scheduled for that player's team. If any ejected player continues to display unsportsmanlike conduct justifying expulsion after having been already ejected and leaving the playing field, the umpire in his judgment may eject such player for the next succeeding game scheduled for that player's team. Any player ejected two (2) times in any one playing season is automatically suspended from league participation, pending action by the Disciplinary Review Committee. Any ejection of a player from a game will be reported within 24 hours to the Division Vice President by that player's manager and also to the Chief-of-Umpires by the game umpire, either of whom may refer the incident to the Disciplinary Review Committee for possible further disciplinary action. Any further disciplinary action must be taken by the Disciplinary Review Committee and communicated to the player and his manager prior to the second succeeding game after which the ejection occurred. Players cannot be suspended by a manager or coach without prior approval of the Disciplinary Review Committee. The Howard-Palmetto Baseball-Softball Association is a drug and alcohol abuse free organization. Any player found to be in possession of alcohol, drugs, or drug paraphernalia will be subject to action by the Disciplinary Review Committee.

4. **Spectators** - In the event spectators become unruly and exhibit behavior detrimental to the league's sportsmanship objectives, the umpire will issue a warning to both managers who, in turn, will inform their team's spectators of the umpire's ability to suspend the game if the conduct of the spectators does not improve. Spectators **shall refrain from the use of artificial noise-makers** while the pitcher is set to pitch and through the swing by the batter. If, in the judgment of the umpire, League Commissioner, or authorized agents, the initial warning to the spectators is not sufficient, the game will be forfeited by

the team with which the spectator is associated. Alcohol is strictly forbidden at all games.

5. Unless an ejected manager, coach or player is instructed to leave the park, the ejected manager, coach or player may stay at the game and become a spectator provided they:

   (a) Sit in the bleachers; and

   (b) Not become unruly or exhibit behavior detrimental to the League's sportsmanship objectives.

   (c) An ejected manager or coach may not in any way coach his/her team. PENALTY - Forfeit by umpires discretion.

6. It is strongly recommended that there not be any alcohol consumption at any Howard-Palmetto Baseball-Softball Association game or practice.

RULE 13: PLAYING SCHEDULE

1. There will be no schedule changes. Any violations will be subject to forfeit by all teams involved.
2. All rain out games are to be re-scheduled by the respective Vice President with approval of the Commissioner.
3. Ideally, the schedule will provide for each team to play all other teams in their division at least twice. The League Commissioner may make an exception to this rule.
4. There will be no regular season inter-league play except by decision of the Softball Commissioner and notification to the Executive Committee.
5. In the Spring, the playing season begins in January and continues through May. In the Fall, the playing season begins in September and continues through December. The season will play in its entirety to set the seeding for each age division. In the Fall, each team will only play one game per week.
6. In all divisions there will be a postseason playoff. The regular season total record will be used to determine playoff seeding. The champion of the playoffs will be the league champion.
7. For SPRING. Playoffs for all divisions will use a double elimination format where all teams are in the playoffs. Seeding will be determined by the regular season record of all teams per division. The top 2 seeds will, when possible, be given a first-round bye. Playoff brackets will be determined after registration is complete but before the season begins. For FALL, Playoffs for all divisions will use a single elimination format, tournament style.
8. Procedure in case of ties: Two (2) or more teams with the identical final season record will use the following tiebreakers to determine seeding:

   a The tied team's head to head win/loss record.

   b The tied team's run differential against each other.

   c Weighted strength of wins against all other teams.

   d A random draw performed by the division VP.

   Example: In an 8 team division teams **a**, **b** and **c** are all tied for 2nd place with the same 14-6 record. Teams **d** and **e** also have a tie for 5th place with 8-12 records.

   Scenario i: Teams **a** and **c** played each other twice, splitting their games. Teams **a** and **b** played each other twice and also split, but teams **b** and **c** played three (3) times with **b** losing 2 of 3. Team **a** had a 2-2 head to head record, team **b** had a 2-3 head to head record and team **c** had a 3-2 head to head record. Seed 2 will go to team **c**, seed 3 to team **a** and seed 4 to team **b**.

   Scenario ii: Teams **a**, **b** and **c** played each other twice and they all split. Their game scores are the following:

Team	Team	Score	Differential
a	b	6-5	a: +1, b: -1
a	b	4-7	a: -3, b: +3
a	c	3-9	a: -6, c: +6

a	c	13-9	a: +4, c: -4
b	c	2-0	b: +2, c: -2
b	c	4-3	b: -1, c: +1

Team **a** had a run differential of -4, team **b** had a run differential of +3, and team **c** had a run differential of +1. Seed 2 will go to team **b**, seed 3 to team **c** and seed 4 to team **a**.

Scenario iii: Teams **a**, **b** and **c** played each other twice and they all split. Their run differentials were also the same at +2. Points will be calculated against the other 5 teams in the division, giving weight to the higher finishing teams. All wins against the #1 team will be given 8 points, wins against the #5 and #6 teams (teams **d** and **e** are tied for 5th place) will be given 4 points, wins against the #7 team will be given 2 points and wins against the #8 team will be given 1 point. Team **a** has 24 points and is the 2 seed, team **b** has 21 points and is the 3 seed and team **c** has 20 points and is the 4 seed.

Scenario iv: The first three (3) tiebreakers do not resolve the tie, so the Division Vice President will have each manager draw a card (2,3,4). The team who draws the 2 will be the 2 seed, the team that draws the 3 will be the 3 seed and the team that draws the 4 will be the 4 seed.

9. Example playoff format for a 6 team division:



The top 2 finishing teams will receive a bye. Seed 3 will play seed 6 and seed 4 will play seed 5. Seed 1 will play the lowest seeded winner and seed 2 will play the other winner. Winning teams continue on in the winners' bracket. There will be a losers' bracket for all teams that lose a game. Once a team loses a second game they are eliminated. The team who comes out of the winners' bracket will play the team who survives the losers' bracket. If the loser bracket team wins this final game, a second game must be played to determine the overall champion (you must lose twice to be eliminated). The higher seed team will be the home team in all winners' and losers' bracket games. The winners' bracket team will be home team in the final game against the losers bracket with a coin flip in the 2nd championship game (if necessary). Brackets will be provided once the number of teams has been determined.

10. Final League Standings: (example with a 6-team division)

1st place: playoff champion
2nd place: finals losing team
3rd place: semi-final loser from the loser bracket
4th place: 2 quarter final losers to play for 4th place (add'l game not shown above).
5th place: loser of 4th place game
6th place: first team eliminated

RULE 14: EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

1. Only official and legal bats will be allowed. A one piece rubber grip and knob combination is illegal. Metal bats must have a non-metal grip. The batter is OUT if a ball is hit, either fair or foul, with an illegal bat. All bats must have an approved USSSA stamp.
2. A standard fielder's glove may be worn by any player, but mitts may be used only by the Catcher and First Baseman.
3. Batters must wear headgear that protects the ears and the back of the head and have a face mask in all divisions. Batting helmets will also be used for base running and the on-deck areas, Chin straps are required in Softball I and must be buckled. If a batter or runner intentionally removes or dislodges her headgear while a base runner or while a play is being made on this player either as a batter or a runner, she shall be declared OUT. The helmet may be removed when time is out.
4. NOTE: Whether the act is intentional is a judgment call by the umpire. If a player steps into the batter's box without a face mask, that team will receive a warning. The second violation will be declared an out.
5. The home team will be required to furnish balls for each game, which will be returned to them after the game. In all divisions, two (2) new official softballs will be used.
6. No players will be permitted to deface their Official HPBSA uniform in any manner, and all players must wear their complete team uniform, supplied by the league, properly at all times. Hats are not required, but if worn must be the team hat. In cold weather, sweatshirts and jackets can be worn (Pitchers may wear jackets when running the bases.) PENALTY - Players in violation of this rule will not be allowed to play.
7. A pitcher's sweatshirt or glove shall not be the same color as the ball being used in the game. Pitchers shall not wear any type of sweat band. Pitchers may not wear white or gray gloves.
8. Shoes with metal spikes, metal cleats, or screw-on cleats are strictly prohibited on players in all divisions. PENALTY - The player shall be ejected.
9. For safety and injury prevention, no players shall be allowed to play if they are wearing casts, splints, or other type of hard foreign objects. Soft bandages will be permitted. Also, jewelry, including metal stars and emblems, must not be worn during a game, except for a medic alert necklace. PENALTY – 1st warning will be a team warning, after 2nd violation both manager and player are confined to the bench for the remainder of the game. The League Commissioner shall be the final authority on all matters relative to this section.
10. If names are put on the back of a player's uniform it must be the player's last name.
11. In Division I, catchers may use batting helmets while playing the catching position.
12. For all divisions, the use of face masks in the field is required for S1, S2 and S3.

RULE 15: PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

1. A team shall consist of ten (10) players in the Softball I, II & III Division. Teams will be permitted to play with 8 players except Softball I can play with 7 players in the regular season only. The location of the eight or seven players on the field will be left up to the discretion of the manager of the team involved. A manager will be permitted to insert a late arriving ninth/tenth player in the ninth/tenth position providing the player arrives prior to the end of the fourth inning in Divisions II & III. A player who is present earlier in the game but does not enter it at that time because of not feeling well will be considered the same as a late arriving player. Ejections occurring when no substitutes are available will result in an automatic forfeit by the team involved if they cannot field a minimum of eight players.
2. A forfeit shall be declared if either team is unable to field a minimum of eight players (seven in the regular season of Softball I) at game time (first pitch/play ball call) or at any time during the game, unless due to injury per Rule 16.7. If neither team is able to field a minimum of eight (seven in the regular season of Softball I) players, a double forfeit will be declared.

3. Batting Substitutions - All teams shall have their players bat in rotation throughout the game even though they are not playing in the field. A player who arrives after the game begins, but before the end of the third (3) innings in Division IV or 4th inning in Division II & III, will be considered the last batter in the line-up even if the home team has not batted. The inning ends when the third out is called.
4. Fielding Substitutions - In ALL DIVISIONS, no players may remain on the bench for two consecutive innings while their team is in the field. In ALL DIVISIONS, no player may remain on the bench for more than three (3) innings per game.
   Violations of these rules shall constitute an illegal substitution.
5. Except to replace players lost due to injury or disciplinary ejections, absolutely no fielding substitutions, with the exception of the pitcher, may be made, from the bench, during a half time inning. In other words if a player is put on the bench during the defensive half of an inning, she may not enter the game as substitute except as a pitcher, during that half inning. (Exception - as provided in Rule 16.7, injury substitutions). PENALTY for illegal substitution: Game will be forfeited. Players arriving after completion of the third (3) innings will not be permitted to play. If a player arrives during an inning that inning is considered an inning on the bench. All players sitting out will be recorded in both scorebooks each inning.
6. On all batting and fielding substitutions, it behooves all umpires, scorekeepers, and opposing managers and coaches to see to it that a forfeit does not occur. The league finds it reprehensible for a manager or coach to recognize that a forfeitable offense is about to occur and deliberately allow it to take place for his own advantage.
7. Disciplinary Substitutions - Any disciplinary action against players during the course of the game for actions which occur during the game is the prerogative of the umpires, the League Commissioners, or authorized agents. Managers will be permitted to make disciplinary substitutions after consultation with and the approval of the umpires.
8. Injury Substitutions - An injured player may be substituted by the manager of the team involved. Injured players are permitted to return to the game at the end of any subsequent half-inning only with the concurrence of the umpire. AN INJURED PLAYER MAY ONLY RETURN TO THE GAME ONCE.
9. If removed a second time, the injured player must remain on the bench for the remainder of the game. Teams with only nine players will be permitted to continue with the eight/nine players. Games will be suspended when an injury occurs to a team playing with eight players if the injured player is unable to return to the game. In all divisions, if a player is injured while at bat and cannot complete her turn at bat, the next batter in the line-up will then bat and assume the ball and strike count of the injured batter. If a player leaves the game for whatever reason (illness, injury, ejection, disciplinary substitution, or personal reasons), and is unable to return, her subsequent turns at bat will NOT be an automatic out. A player who is injured while running the bases and who cannot continue will be substituted for by the player that made the last out. If a player has been injured before an out has been made in the game or inning, then the last batted out from the previous inning shall be used. There will be no pre-determined courtesy runners allowed under any circumstances. A player who is injured while at bat, running the bases, or in the field, may have a substitution, as per the injury substitution rules. If the injured player cannot be safely removed from the field, the umpire will suspend the game time clock until play is able to be safely resumed.
10. **If one of their players has not played in the two consecutive preceding games, all managers must, before the next game, notify their Vice President.** The purpose of this rule is to prevent deliberate unsportsmanlike manipulation of the number, or the ability of the players participating in games. If the involved player misses the subsequent (third) game without the above-mentioned notification and if the Vice President's judgment is that the circumstances so warrant, then the third game and any such subsequent games will be forfeited to the other team. Similarly, if a player permanently withdraws from a team, the manager must report this to the Vice President, or if not available, division commissioner, within forty-eight (48) hours of being notified of the withdrawal. If this is not done, and the Vice President believes that the circumstances so warrant, a meeting of the Disciplinary Committee will be called to decide if any or all of that team's subsequent victories, beginning with the game in which the involved player was no longer on the team, should be forfeited.
11. If the situation arises that a player is injured to the extent that a replacement from the pool is assigned to a team replacing the injured player, then the newly assigned player is considered a TANDEM player to the "injured inactive" player. The

TANDEM player is subject to the same restrictions, if any, as originally specified at the draft for the "injured inactive" player. (For example, if the "injured inactive" player was a "no pitch" at the draft, then the TANDEM player is also a "no pitch", etc.) Should the injured player recover and rejoin the team, the player and her TANDEM will be considered a complete TANDEM for all remaining games, and must be substituted one for the other under all conditions.

12. Tandem players must alternate in the batting order and in the field. When both players are physically able to play, and only one player is present for a scheduled game, the player present may play the entire game. If both players are pitchers, the tandem player will become a "no pitch". When the "injured inactive" player returns, the "injured inactive" player may pitch up to 4 innings and the tandem player will play the last 3 innings. NOTE: Consult commissioners, for an appropriate ruling, each time a TANDEM situation arises. The commissioner may restrict or adjust the fielding substitution, including pitching, at his/her sole discretion.

13. If a player sustains an injury requiring more than first aid, such as a broken bone, concussion, a laceration requiring sutures, etc., the manager must notify a park official and the League President within 24 hours of the injury. Notification is a requirement of the Dade County Parks and Recreation Department.

14. If a player has or develops a medical condition that could affect the player's or other players' safety or health, in the opinion of the commissioner, the commissioner may require written medical clearance before the player is permitted to play in the league.

RULE 16: THE GAME

1. In Division III, a regulation Game shall consist of 7 innings or playing time expired. In Division II a regulation game will be 6 innings or playing time, and in Division I it will be 5 innings or playing time expired. There is no minimum innings in a Division I game. An Official game requires a minimum of 4 1/2 innings played in Division III & IV and 3 1/2 innings played in Division II if the home team is ahead. If during the progress of any game, the home team, after at least 4 1/2 innings (3 1/2 for Division II) have been played is leading by 12 or more runs, or 10 after 6 innings, or the visiting team, after at least 5 innings have been played is leading by 12 or more runs, or 10 after 6 innings, at the end of any complete inning, the umpire shall terminate the game in favor of the leading team.

Mercy Rule: If during any game in Division II or III:

a. The **home team** is leading by **15 or more runs** after at least **2½ innings**, or by **12 or more runs** after **3½ innings**, or by **8 or more runs** after **4½ innings**

-or-

b. The **visiting team** is leading by **15 or more runs** after at least **3 innings**, or by **12 or more runs** after **4 innings,** or by **8 or more runs** after **5 innings**,

then at the end of any completed inning the umpire shall **end the game** and declare the **leading team the winner**.

2. The playing time (time limit) shall be determined from the time the umpire calls "play ball" at the start of the game, until the third out is made by the home team at bat. Once the umpire indicates time has expired, the teams must finish the current inning. SOFTBALL I will have a 1 hour time limit or five (5) complete innings. SOFTBALL II will have a 1 hour 15 minutes time limit or six (6) innings with a Kansas tie breaker after six innings are completed, or time has elapsed. SOFTBALL III will have a 1 hour 30 minutes time limit or seven (7) innings with a Kansas tie breaker after 7 innings are completed, or time has elapsed. SOFTBALL IV, 1 hour 30 minutes time limit or seven (7) with a Kansas tie breaker after 7 innings are completed, or time has elapsed. There will be no time limit in any championship games. A Division VP may institute a time limit in a championship game provided that both managers give their consent no later than one day before the game. In all divisions, only 1 offensive conference (called by the offensive team) will be permitted per inning. A Kansas tie breaker is defined as follows: The last completed at bat from the previous inning is put on second base with zero outs. No new inning shall begin after time has expired. Once time has expired, the current inning must be finished, unless the

home team is leading in the bottom of the inning. No game in SOFTBALL III shall exceed 120 minutes. If teams are tied at the conclusion of 120 minutes, the game will end in a tie, unless it is a playoff/championship game.

3. If the allotted playing time has elapsed during any game and:

a) The LOSING team has had its turn at bat in the fifth inning or later, the umpire shall terminate the game in favor of the leading team.

b) BOTH teams have had their turn at bat in the fifth inning and the score is tied, if field availability permits, the game shall be continued until one team is in the lead after a complete inning and is declared the winner.

c) The LOSING team has not had its turn at bat in the fifth inning. If field availability permits, the game may be continued until a winner is declared after the LOSING team has batted in the fifth inning OR –

d) The LOSING team has not had its turn at bat in the fifth inning and field availability does not permit continuance of the game - THIS WILL BECOME A SUSPENDED GAME, and completed under Rule (2-D) below.

4. **Suspended Game** - A game interrupted by rain prior to being an official game will be considered a suspended game. Once a game has started, the home plate umpire must wait at least 15 minutes before suspending the game. This is a judgment call by the umpire and not subject to protest. The safety of the players will be the primary concern. If or when play is resumed, any elapsed (rain delay) time will not count against the time limit. The remainder of the playing time (time limit) will apply.

(a) If a game that has gone long enough to be an official game is called because of inclement weather during an uncompleted inning, and the home team is ahead, the game ends and shall be an official game.

(b) If a game that has gone long enough to be an official game is called because of inclement weather during an uncompleted inning, and the visiting team has scored one or more runs to tie the score, and the home team has not scored, or the visiting team has scored one or more runs to take the lead, or the game is tied, the game becomes a suspended game.

(c) If a game that has gone long enough to be an official game is called because of natural darkness during an uncompleted inning, and the score is either tied or the visiting team is ahead, the game will be considered a suspended game. If the game is an official game and the home team is ahead at the time the game is called, the home team shall be declared the winner. This does not refer to failure of park lights.

(d) A suspended game may be rescheduled to be resumed, at a later date, from the exact point of suspension of the original game. The completion of a suspended game is a continuation of the original game. The lineup and batting order of both teams shall be exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension subject to the rules governing substitutions and the following exceptions:

(1) When a game is suspended after the completion of the third inning, a player who was in the original lineup but not present for the rescheduled game, will be replaced by a player, if available, who was not present at the original game. If two or more players who were not present at the original game are available, they will act as tandem players under Rule 16.9 for the remainder of the game.

(2) When a game is suspended prior to the completion of the third inning, any player(s) who was not at the original game, but is at the continuation, will be inserted at the end of the batting order.

(3) When a game is suspended after the completion of the third inning, and a team was playing with only eight/nine players, it must complete the rescheduled game with only eight/nine players; moreover, the inserted player is not allowed to pitch.

(4) A player (pool player) who was not on the team roster when the game was suspended may be used in any rescheduled game, even if said player has taken the place of a player no longer with the team.

(5) A player who was at the first game will not be allowed in the second game if he arrives after her next turn at bat. If arriving before her at bat but after resumption of play, she will replace the player who replaced her (if any).

5. **Score book** - Each team is required to keep a score book for every game played, with the "official book" belonging to the home team. The home team's score book will list the starting batting order for both teams, by last name and number, which cannot be changed once the game is started, with the exception of authorized substitutions. The score will be verified in each book at the completion of every half inning. In SOFTBALL II, III, & IV, ALL innings pitched by that team's pitcher, including the date the innings were pitched, must be conspicuously and permanently recorded in the pitcher's own team's score book. This record must be made available to the opposing manager, if requested, prior to the start of any game. If the score book is not available, with records sufficient to determine the eligibility of a particular pitcher, then the game will be played, and the outcome will be determined by the Protest Committee, if requested by the offended manager.
   The scorekeepers are strongly urged to sit together.
6. A charged conference takes place when a defensive team manager/coach (not in the field) requests suspension of play and gives the umpire cause to believe that he/she has delivered a message (by any means) to the pitcher. It is considered a charged conference whether the manager/coach enters the playing field or not.
7. The on-deck batter must stand in the on-deck circle behind the hitter.
8. After one charged offensive timeout per inning, the second in the inning is called a strike on the hitter.
9. Infield practice will be allowed if time permits based on umpires judgment; however, an infield/outfield ball will be allowed between innings.
10. In all divisions coaches must be inside the dugout except for the purpose of coaching first or third base. EXCEPTION: Softball I defensive coaches allowed behind the outfielders.

RULE 17: PITCHING REGULATIONS

1. In Softball II, a player may pitch no more than three innings per game. In Softball III , a player may pitch no more than four innings per game. No pitching regulation may be waived for any reason, excluding a game that goes into a Kansas tie breaker for Softball II and III, each pitcher that has reached their pitching limit may pitch one additional inning in Kansas tie breaker.
   PENALTY - Game forfeited.
2. Only one charged conference per pitcher, per inning will be allowed, with the removal from the mound on the second charged conference. A visit to the mound by the team manager or other team representative between innings is not a charged conference.
3. In order to speed up play, there will be a maximum of one (1) minute allowed between each half inning.
4. The pitcher will not be allowed any additional time to complete her warm-ups. PENALTY - If the team in the field is not ready when the umpire calls "play ball" she may award a count of one ball to the batter and continue to go until the team is ready. EXCEPTION: Whenever a new pitcher takes the mound, she will be allowed up to a maximum of five (5) warm-up pitches.
5. In SOFTBALL II, III, & IV, if a pitcher hits three (3) batters in the same inning, she must be removed from the mound for the remainder of the inning.
6. No intentional walks are permitted in Softball. All batters must be pitched to.
7. If a pitcher is removed from the mound and returns in the same inning, she will be charged with two (2) innings pitched.
8. In SOFTBALL II and III, prior to starting the pitch, the pitcher's pivot foot must be in contact with the pitching plate and non-pivot foot is in contact with or behind the pitching plate. An illegal pitch shall be called a ball on the batter.
9. For record purposes, an inning pitched will be charged once the umpire declares "play ball" or the pitcher either delivers one pitch to a batter or makes any play to a base or balks.
10. For SOFTBALL II and III, any pitch that hits the ground before it hits the batter will be ruled a ball; the batter does NOT get to take a base if the ball hits the ground prior to making contact with the hitter.

RULE 18: BASERUNNING

1. In All Divisions, if the catcher is a base runner, and there are two (2) outs, she SHALL be replaced as a base runner by the player who was declared the last out.

2. In ALL Divisions, base runners must slide or avoid the tag in their own established base line. This rule exists to prevent injuries and thus should be enforced only when there is a collision between two bodies. This would also rule out incidental contact as a reason to enforce the rule. PENALTY - This is a judgment call by the umpire. Runner will be declared out and also may be ejected from the game.
3. A runner may not jump over a defensive player who is in the act of making a play on that runner.
4. In Softball I & II Divisions, the infield fly rule does NOT apply. The ball must be caught for an out.
5. In SOFTBALL I, the ball remains alive until the umpire calls "time", which should be done when an attempt to throw the ball to the pitching circle and the attempt crosses the plane of the circle in any part.
6. In All Divisions, There will be NO head-first slides into home plate. PENALTY -The runner is automatically declared out.
7. In Division II, a runner may not leave the base to take a lead until the pitched ball crosses the plate.
8. In Division I, if there is an overthrow of any base, the runner may only advance one base total. (i.e., if the ball is overthrown, the runner will not be awarded the base they were going to and one more).
9. In SOFTBALL II, Baserunner cannot score from 3rd on a pitch from the pitcher.

RULE 19: 8U SOFTBALL I

1. Field dimensions are:
   a. 50' between bases
   b. 35' pitchers mound with circle
   c. Defensive outfield arc from foul line to foul line 20' behind base line.

Offensive Game

2. Format is Coach Pitch and will be Coach Pitch all season. The batter will receive a maximum of five (5) pitches (as opposed to 3 strikes) except when the last pitch is hit foul at which time she will receive another pitch. In the event the fifth pitch is fouled off and all consecutive fouls, the batter shall continue to bat.
   a. Use of a Tee or Soft Toss - the first time through the batting order only, if the batter fails to make contact after a 5th pitch, the team may choose between using a tee or soft toss. The batter will be given one (1) swing to put the ball in play. A swing and a miss or a foul ball will be declared an out. The tee or soft toss option will not be available once the leadoff batter comes to bat for the second time in the game.
   b. If a player is 6 years old or younger on the day of the game, they will have the option to use the tee throughout the game if they fail to make contact after a 5th pitch. The batter will be given one (1) swing to put the ball in play. A swing and a miss or a foul ball will be declared an out.
3. Balls are not called and bases on balls are not taken.
4. Coach must begin pitching motion from inside the pitching circle.
5. You bat your line up and the opposing team bats their line up. The inning is played until three (3) outs are recorded or five (5) runs are scored. In the 4th inning (last scheduled inning) and the 4th inning only all three outs must be made per side.
6. No bunting or stealing.
7. If a batted ball hits the coach pitching, the ball is dead (no pitch). At the discretion of the umpire, a batter may be called out if coach intentionally interferes.
8. Base runners cannot run until after the hitter makes contact.
9. The pitcher/coach cannot actively coach when the ball is in play. PENALTY – Coach is removed as pitcher after a warning.
10. Note: Pitching guidelines may be modified as the season progresses at the discretion of the Commissioner and Division Vice President.
11. The score of the game will be kept by the number of runs recorded in the game.
12. The maximum runs scored shall be five (5) runs per inning for the first three innings of the game.

Defensive Game

13. 10 players play in the field on defense. Two coaches are allowed on the playing field when their team is on defense to assist in player instruction (provided they position themselves behind the outfields).

14. The ball remains live until the umpire calls "time" which is done when the ball is attempted to be thrown to the pitching circle and the ball crosses the plane of the pitching circle. If the first baseman is overthrown, the runners can only advance one base from the time of the throw.

15. Only six infielders are allowed at one time.

16. Fielders may not stand in the baseline or on the base when waiting for a play.

17. No defensive player may position themselves closer than 15' inside the base or baseline toward home plate from any position. PENALTY - After one warning, a player violating this rule will not be allowed to play any position in the infield for the remainder of the game.

18. Outfielders must be positioned on or behind the 20' defensive arc at the start of the pitch.

19. Per the discretion of the S1 VP, greater than four outfielders may be permitted during the regular season only.

20. Managers are allowed one defensive timeout per inning.

21. On the initial batted ball, an outfielder cannot make a putout on a base by receiving a thrown ball.

22. The coach that is pitching must start his delivery with one foot inside the pitching circle.

RULE 20: 10U SOFTBALL II

1. In any one inning, if the entire batting order (not to exceed the maximum number of players that are present) comes to bat, the inning shall end even if there are less than three (3) outs. Or in the event that five (5) runs are scored. This per inning run limit exists for innings one (1) through three (3) and will be addressed by the division VP and the commissioner. (Regardless of the number of players on the opposing team) EXCEPTION: In the fourth (4) and any subsequent innings, three (3) outs must be made regardless of the number of batters for both the visitor and home teams. SOFTBALL II will use four outfielders.

2. The Division VP has option to decide at any point before or during the season to use Hybrid Pitching Rules as stipulated below or return back to regular rules depending on the pitcher ratings or pitcher development during the season.

Player Pitch Phase

1. Player Pitcher starts every at bat per normal rules.
2. Batter either puts the ball in play, strikes out, is hit-by-pitch or 4 balls are thrown.
3. If a pitcher throws 4 balls, the Coach Pitch Phase starts.
4. All remaining strikes carry over to the Coach Pitch Phase. Example: After a 3 ball and 1 strike count a pitcher throws a 4th ball. The coach would only get 2 pitches in the Coach Pitch Phase.

Coach Pitch Phase

1. Player Pitcher will remain on the mound during the Coach Pitch Phase to play defense.
2. Depending upon how many carry-over strikes the Batter has, the coach will throw that many pitches. Coach Pitches are "automatic strikes" regardless of whether the Batter swings (except when the last pitch is hit foul at which time she will receive another pitch).
3. Batted balls that hit the Coach will be ruled a dead ball.
4. If the Coach interferes (intentionally or not) with the Pitcher's ability to play defense the Batter will be called out.
5. There is no stealing of bases or advancing on Wild Pitches.

RULE 21: 11+ SOFTBALL III

In SOFTBALL III, in any one inning, the inning shall end if seven (7) runs have scored, even if there are less than three (3) outs. This per inning run limit exists for innings one (1) through three (3) and will be addressed by the division VP and the commissioner. EXCEPTION: In the fourth (4) and any subsequent innings, three (3) outs must be made regardless of the number of batters for both the visitor and home teams.

RULE 22: SOFTBALL COMMISSIONER

The league will allow an active manager to hold the office of Softball Commissioner.

AWARDS

In addition to each division receiving individual first, second, and third place trophies, In SOFTBALL I, all players will receive a participation award.

The following special awards may be presented annually:

COACHES AWARD

This award is presented to the most coachable player in Softball IV. The player must demonstrate the qualities of sportsmanship and leadership which earn her the respect and admiration of all players and coaches alike. She need not be the best or an outstanding player.

Recipients

2012 Shannon Renouf
2013 Morgan Bowers
2014 Kyra Foggelsanger
2015 Kaitlyn Hernandez
2016 Adlyn Hernandez

FRAN BURNS AWARD

This award is named after the individual who was most responsible for bringing girls' softball into the Howard-Palmetto Baseball & Softball Association program. This award is to be presented to the "most valuable player" in Softball IV.

Although the player's performance in previous years may be considered in the selection process, it is her achievement as a last year player that should be the major consideration.

Recipients

2012 Taylor Sanchez
Veronica Sanchez
2013 Lilly Barlow
2014 Hanna Burge
2015 Erin McGlothlin
2016 Natalie Menendez

ROBERTO ALEMAN MEMORIAL AWARD

This award is presented in memory of a man who was a manager and officer in the Howard-Palmetto Baseball & Softball Association. His personal attributes of leadership, enthusiasm, dedication and sportsmanship should be demonstrated by the recipient of this award. To be eligible, the player must be in Softball IV and have played in the HPBSA for eight consecutive seasons. This individual's personal characteristics displayed throughout these eight years shall be considered in her selection.

Recipients

2012 Megan Chochoon
2013 Carly Herskowitz
2014 Taylor Burroughs
2015 Stephanie Howard
2016 Kelsey Perdomo
Kaitlyn Perdomo

The recipients of the Coaches Award, Fran Burns Award and the Roberto Alemon Memorial Award, will be selected by an Awards Committee to be appointed by the Softball Commissioner and must include the Softball Commissioner and the Softball IV Vice President.

LEAGUE AWARDS

WAYNE MOORE MEMORIAL AWARD

This award is presented in memory of a Howard-Palmetto Baseball-Softball Association coach. His personal attributes of affection, guidance, enthusiasm and leadership should be demonstrated by the adult recipients of this award. NOTE: The recipient of the above award will be selected by an Awards Committee consisting of previous winners.

Recipients

1990 Bob Heggy
1991 Cessy Rubinson
1992 Joe Cilli
1993 Bill Shaw
1994 Bob Hingston
1995 Dennis Lacina
1996 Pat Wilson
1997 Camille Cilli
1998 Bob Slater
1999 Bob Rachlin
2000 Frank Dodge
2001 Kim Deas
2002 Bob Schroer
2003 Janet Capparelli
2004 Howard Levrant
2005 Gary Alvo
Linda Ketchum
2006 Rick Shore
2007 John Buchholz
2008 Andy Wasserstrom
2009 Grant Miller
2010 Marina Demers
2011 Steve Schwartz
2012 Randy Yackee
2013 Karl Sturge
2014 Michelle Lopez
2015 Rick Teller
2016 Manny Exposito