

2009 EMASS SENIOR SOFTBALL PLAYING RULES

[Adopted By Board of Directors on 1/6/09]

[NOTE: Unless a Rule is specifically identified as only American, National and/or Atlantic, the 2009 EMASS Rules shall apply to all EMASS Softball Divisions.

RULE 1: GENERAL

1.1 EMASS has adopted the "Official Rules of Softball of the Amateur Softball Association of America", as amended from time to time (the "ASA Rules"). Accordingly, unless there is an EMASS Rule (See 1.2 below) governing a particular situation, the ASA Rules shall control.

1.2 The Board of Directors may amend, supplement, clarify and or change the ASA Rules (the "EMASS Rules").

1.3 In the event of any conflict between the ASA Rules and the EMASS Rules, the EMASS Rules shall govern.

1.4 The 2009 EMASS SENIOR SOFTBALL PLAYING RULES set forth below, replace and supersede any earlier EMASS playing rules.

RULE 2: BATS

2.1 ALL BATS AUTHORIZED FOR PLAY IN EMASS:

(A) MUST HAVE AN ASA 2000 OR 2004 CERTIFICATION STAMP VISIBLE ON THE BAT;

AND

(B) MUST NOT APPEAR ON THE ASA'S LIST OF "NON-APPROVED BATS WITH CERTIFICATION MARKS (2000 AND 2004)" as posted on the Association's Website.

2.1.1 Any bat which does not meet **BOTH** of the above requirements is considered to be an "UNAUTHORIZED BAT" and may not be used in any EMASS softball game of any kind (i.e. pick-up, regular season, tournament, and playoff) or in any pre-game practice.

2.1.2 Although a bat may be authorized for use by meeting the requirements in Section 2.1 above, if the bat fails to meet other ASA Bat Regulations (i.e. the bat is altered or damaged or subsequently added to the ASA List), the bat shall not be permitted.

2.1.3 All violations of these Bat Regulations must be reported by the Managers involved to the Rules Coordinator as soon as possible for review, appropriate action and record keeping.

2.1.4 In the event that a player is in possession of a bat that would otherwise be authorized but has had the ASA Certification Stamp worn off due to wear and tear, such player may request in writing that the Rules Coordinator waive the ASA Certification Stamp requirement. If this waiver is approved, the Rules Coordinator will notify the Division Coordinator of the name of the player and shall specifically identify the bat in question.

2.2 PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF EMASS BAT REGULATIONS

2.2.1 Any person who has attempted to fraudulently apply an ASA Certification Stamp to a bat shall be banned from all EMASS softball activities for a period of two (2) complete seasons.

2.2.2 Unapproved bats should remain in the owner's trunk or bat bag as the case may be and should not be brought on or about the playing field. If an unapproved bat is discovered on or about the playing field or the bench/dugout area **prior** to the commencement (i.e. prior to the 1st pitch) of the first game the following shall apply:

- a. The bat shall be removed from the playing area; and
- b. The owner of the bat will receive a warning from the Rules Coordinator.

2.2.3 If an unapproved bat is discovered to have been used **during** an at-bat [i.e. the discovery occurred prior to the 1st pitch to the next batter] the following shall apply:

- a. The bat shall be removed from the game;
- b. The owner of the bat shall be ejected from the game;
- c. The player using the bat shall be declared "out" and all runners shall return to their bases prior to the at-bat;
- d. The player using the bat shall be ejected from the game; and
- e. The Manager shall receive a written warning from the Rules Coordinator.

2.2.4 If an unapproved bat is discovered on or about the playing field or the bench/dugout area **subsequent** to the 1st pitch of the first game [but not during or immediately after an at-bat] the following penalties shall apply:

- a. The bat shall be removed from the game;
- b. The owner of the bat shall be ejected from the game; and
- c. The Manager shall receive a written warning from the Rules Coordinator.
- d. If ownership of the non-approved bat cannot be ascertained the umpire or opposing Manager will confiscate the bat and the game will continue.

2.3 MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS

2.3.1 Second offenses by any bat owner, player or manager will result in a suspension of one (1) year from the date of infraction.

2.3.2 In the event of any suspension under the provisions of this By-Law all fees previously paid to EMASS will be forfeited.

RULE 3: ALIGNMENT OF DEFENSIVE PLAYERS

[ATLANTIC AND NATIONAL]

3.1 Prior to the commencement of the game the Managers of each team shall place cones or other identifiable markers (chalk/paint lines) at a distance of 150' from home plate along each of the two foul lines.

3.2 **Prior to the ball being struck**, a minimum of 4 defensive players (outfielders) must be positioned BEHIND THE CONES OR OTHER MARKERS.

3.3 It shall be the responsibility of the Managers and the batting team to insure compliance with this Rule 3 by pointing out to the opposing Manager and/or Umpire any violations prior to a pitch. In the event a defensive player crosses the 150' line before the ball is struck, the Umpire shall have the discretion to award the batter/runner 1B and any base runners one base from the time of the pitch.

RULE 4: FIVE RUN RULE

4.1 **[AMERICAN]** During innings 1 - 6, the batting team may score a maximum of 5 runs only. In the 7th inning and any subsequent extra innings there is no limitation.

4.2 **[ATLANTIC AND NATIONAL]** During innings 1 - 6, the batting team may score the greater of (a) 5

runs or (b) as many runs as needed in that half-inning to tie the score. In the 7th inning and any subsequent extra innings there is no limitation.

RULE 5: MERCY RULE/EXTRA INNINGS/GAME PLAY

5.1 There is no "Mercy Rule" and all games are played to a conclusion.

5.2 A pitcher shall be entitled to only 5 warm-up pitches in the 1st inning, 3 warm-up pitches in the 2nd inning and 1 warm-up pitch thereafter. All infield warm-up must be terminated immediately following the permitted warm-up pitches.

5.3 The tie-breaker rule as set forth in the ASA Rules shall be utilized for any game which is tied after the 8th inning of play.

5.4 **[ATLANTIC]** In the 2nd game of a doubleheader, half-innings shall be played back to back as follows:

Inning 1:	V/H
Inning 2:	H/V
Inning 3:	V/H
Inning 4:	H/V
Inning 5:	V/H
Inning 6:	H/V
Inning 7:	V/H

5.4.1 The bases will be cleared after the third out.

5.4.2 The 5 run rule applies separately to each half-inning.

RULE 6: COMMENCEMENT OF GAMES/MINIMUM NUMBER OF PLAYERS

6.1 The first game of a doubleheader shall begin at the regularly scheduled times. The 2nd game shall begin no earlier than 15 minutes after the end of the 1st game, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Managers. If a team has forfeited the 1st game due to insufficient players, the 2nd game shall begin 30 minutes after the original starting time for the 1st game.

6.2 If, at the starting time of a game, a team has less than 8 players available, the 1st game of the doubleheader will be delayed for 15 minutes. If after 15 minutes, the shorthanded team still has less than 8 players the 1st game shall be declared a forfeit in favor of the team that is not shorthanded. If neither team has 8 players available, the 1st game shall be declared a double forfeit.

6.3 If at the beginning of any game a team has only 8, 9 or 10 players, the opposing team **MUST** provide a catcher. This catcher will bat for his own team but has the responsibility to attempt to make all plays that occur at home plate to the best of his/her ability. The team lending a catcher may rotate that catcher amongst their players without restriction. No team is ever obligated to lend more than the 1 player to be used as a catcher only.

6.4 If at the beginning of any game a team has less than 11 regular roster players in the batting order, it shall suffer one (1) automatic out each time the 11th spot in the batting order is scheduled to bat.

6.4.1 If a player arrives after the start of game he/she shall be immediately placed at the end of the batting order.

RULE 7: RESERVED

RULE 8: LINE-UP REQUIREMENTS

8.1 **[AMERICAN]** Defensive playing time and batting line-ups are solely at the discretion of the Manager of each team.

8.2 **[ATLANTIC AND NATIONAL]** Every player who is available to play shall be in the batting line-up for the entire game(s).

8.2.1 If a player arrives after the start of game he/she shall be immediately placed at the end of the batting order.

8.2.2 If a player leaves a game as a result of injury or such other reasonable reason (as may be agreed to in advance by the opposing Manager) and there is no replacement player available, "NO OUT" shall be declared for the vacated spot in the batting order. Such player shall not be permitted to return to play in any game that day.

8.2.3 If a player is ejected from a game or leaves for any reason except as set forth in Section 8.2.2 above and no replacement player is available, that player's spot in the batting order shall be declared an "OUT".

8.3 **[ATLANTIC AND NATIONAL POLICY]** Although defensive playing time is at the discretion of the Manager of each team, the Board of Directors has adopted a general policy guideline that Managers should endeavor to insure that each available player has the opportunity to play a fair and equitable amount of time defensively (e.g. at least 3 innings of each game). Any player who believes that he/she is not receiving a fair and equitable amount of playing time is ENCOURAGED to discuss the matter directly with his/her Manager AND to report this matter to the Atlantic Division Coordinator, the National Division Coordinator and/or the Rules Coordinator.

RULE 9: BATTING COUNT/FOUL BALLS/FOUL TIPS

9.1 The ball/strike count on any batter begins at 0 + 0, that is "no balls, no strikes".

9.2 A foul ball struck AFTER the batter has two strikes is considered a 3rd strike and the batter is "OUT". However, if the 3rd strike foul is caught by a defensive player the ball is "in play" and runners may tag up and advance at their own risk.

9.3 Managers may mutually agree on a 1 + 1 count for the 2nd game of a doubleheader. If a 1 + 1 count is used the batter is entitled to a "courtesy foul ball" after the batter has two strikes. The 2nd foul is considered a 3rd strike and the batter is then "OUT".

9.4 Any foul tip caught by the catcher shall be an "OUT" regardless of the height of the ball.

RULE 10: AMERICAN DIVISION COURTESY RUNNERS

10.1 Courtesy Runners from home plate are not permitted.

10.2 A Courtesy Runner may be substituted for any base runner, at any time and for any reason.

10.3 A player may serve as a Courtesy Runner only once per inning.

10.4 A player serving as a Courtesy Runner cannot be replaced by another Courtesy Runner unless injured serving as a Courtesy Runner in that inning.

RULE 11: ATLANTIC AND NATIONAL DIVISION COURTESY RUNNERS

IT IS THE POLICY AND INTENT OF THE ATLANTIC AND NATIONAL DIVISIONS THAT EVERYONE WHO IS ABLE TO RUN ON THE BASEPATHS SHOULD DO SO.

COURTESY RUNNERS SHALL NOT BE UTILIZED STRATEGICALLY AND SHOULD BE UTILIZED ONLY WHEN REQUESTED BY A PLAYER WHO IS IMPAIRED BY A PHYSICAL INJURY OR CONDITION. LACK OF RUNNING SPEED SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED A PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT.

MANAGERS SHALL NOT ENCOURAGE OR FORCE ANY PLAYER TO UTILIZE A COURTESY RUNNER.

11.1 Courtesy Runners from Home Plate **shall be permitted only**:

(a) If a player has a physical injury or other physical impairment which prevents him/her from reasonably running from home plate to first base, **and**

(b) The player has requested the use of a Courtesy Runner from home plate prior to the start of the game; and

(c) **PRIOR** to the commencement of the game, the Manager has specifically identified to the opposing Manager the physically impaired player who has REQUESTED the use a Courtesy Runner and the nature of the physical injury or impairment.

11.1.1 Any player utilizing a Courtesy Runner from Home Plate once must continue to use a Courtesy Runner during that particular game.

11.1.2 The Courtesy Runner from Home Plate shall always be the player who made the **last out** even if that player has already served as a Courtesy Runner that inning.

By way of example:

(a) a runner on 1B who is forced out at 2B on a ground out would be the Courtesy Runner for the next batter.

(b) a batter who is thrown out attempting to tag up on a fly ball (or is called out for leaving the base early) would be the Courtesy Runner for the next batter and not the batter who struck the ball.

11.1.3 A Courtesy Runner from Home Plate will start with both feet behind a line which is drawn by extending the inside line of the right-handed hitter's batter's box in a straight line to the backstop. That is, the Courtesy Runner shall be starting directly behind and in line with where a right-handed batter would be standing.

11.1.4 A Courtesy Runner from Home Plate may not advance beyond first base for any reason, including overthrows.

11.2 Courtesy Runners from first, second and third base **shall be permitted only**:

(a) If a player has a physical injury or other physical impairment which prevents him/her from reasonably running the bases, **and**

(b) The player has requested the use of a Courtesy Runner from the bases prior to the start of the game; and

(c) **PRIOR** to the commencement of the game, the Manager has specifically identified to the opposing Manager the physically impaired player who has REQUESTED the use a Courtesy Runner from the bases and the nature of the physical injury or impairment.

11.2.1 Any player utilizing a Courtesy Runner from the bases once must continue to use a Courtesy Runner during that particular game.

11.2.2 The Courtesy Runner on the bases shall always be the player who made the last out. By way of example see Section 11.1.2 above.

11.2.3 The Courtesy Runner must replace the batter-runner PRIOR to the first pitch to the next hitter.

11.2.4 A batter who has requested a Courtesy Runner from the bases may not advance beyond first base for any reason, including overthrows.

11.3 A player serving as a Courtesy Runner cannot be replaced by another Courtesy Runner.

11.4 If, following the commencement of a game, a player suffers an acute injury or other impairment which prevents him/her from reasonably running the bases, a Courtesy Runner may be utilized for that player in accordance with this Rule 11.

RULE 12: BASE RUNNING

12.1 A base runner may not leave the base until the ball is **struck**. If the runner leaves his base before the ball is struck, the umpire shall call the runner "OUT" and the ball is dead. A base runner shall not be declared out on a "swing and miss".

12.2 An Additional First Base ("AFB") shall be placed 2' feet from first base in foul territory at the same distance as the Regular First Base ("RFB") from home plate.

12.2.1 A batter-runner MUST run toward and touch the AFB if a throw is made toward first base by an infielder, middle fielder or right fielder. If the batter-runner mistakenly touches the RFB, the batter-runner shall be declared "OUT" and play shall continue. This is an automatic call and not an appeal play.

12.2.2 If the base runner runs towards the RFB but does not touch the RFB and veers at the last minute to touch the AFB but, in the umpire's judgment, impaired the fielder's ability to throw or the fielder's ability to catch the throw, the base runner shall be declared "OUT" and play shall continue.

12.2.3 If there is no throw to first base, the batter-runner may touch either base.

12.2.4 A defensive player may not make an out by touching the "AFB".

12.3 An additional home plate ("AHP") shall be placed (7' 5") to the foul side of the third base line.

12.3.1 There are no tag plays at home plate and all plays at home plate are "force outs".

12.3.2 A base runner must run towards and touch the AHP. If the base runner touches the RHP or the RHP extension, the base runner is declared "OUT" and play shall continue. This is an automatic call and not an appeal play.

12.3.3 If the base runner runs towards the RHP but does not touch the RHP and veers at the last minute to touch the AHP but, in the umpire's judgment, impaired the fielder's ability to throw or the catcher's ability to catch the throw, the base runner shall be declared "OUT".

12.3.4 In order to record an "OUT" at home plate, the defensive player (catcher) must touch the RHP or the RHP extension with the ball in his/her possession before the base runner touches the AHP.

12.3.5 Once the base runner crosses the Commitment Line, the base runner may not return to third base and must proceed directly to the AHP. If the base runner attempts to return to third base the base runner shall be declared "OUT".

12.3.6 No defensive player (including the catcher) may tag the base runner once the base runner has crossed the Commitment Line. If any defensive player tags the base runner after he/she has crossed the Commitment Line, the base runner shall be declared "SAFE".

RULE 13: SLIDING

13.1 **[AMERICAN AND NATIONAL]** Sliding is allowed into and returning to 2nd and 3rd base, and returning to 1st base. The base runner shall be declared "OUT" if he/she slides into first base or home plate.

13.2 **[ATLANTIC]** Sliding into any base is prohibited except that a runner may slide when "returning" to 2nd or 3rd base after having legally rounded that base.

RULE 14: ATLANTIC DIVISION SPECIAL 2B/3B RUNNING RULES

14.1 If a play is being made on a runner at 2B or 3B, the fielder has the right to the base and it is the responsibility of the base runner to avoid physical contact with the fielder.

14.2 If a base runner makes physical contact with a fielder (other than minor incidental contact) as a result of the base runner's failure to avoid such contact by following the guidelines of this Rule 14, the base runner shall be declared "OUT". If there is contact but the base runner has followed the guidelines of this Rule 14, the base runner shall not be declared "OUT".

14.2 In order to avoid physical contact with a fielder the base runner is permitted to run over, past and by either side of 2B and 3B (but not round the base) WITHOUT being required to touch the base.

GUIDELINES:

A BASE RUNNER ADVANCING FROM 1B TO 2B SHOULD RUN TO THE RIGHT OF 2B IF THE THROW IS ANTICIPATED TO COME FROM THE LEFT SIDE OF 2B (I.E. LF, LCF, 3B, SS).

A BASE RUNNER ADVANCING FROM 1B TO 2B SHOULD RUN TO THE LEFT OF 2B IF THE THROW IS ANTICIPATED TO COME FROM THE RIGHT SIDE OF 2B (I.E. RCF, RF, 2B, 1B).

A BASE RUNNER ADVANCING FROM 2B TO 3B SHOULD RUN TO THE RIGHT OF 3B IF THE THROW IS ANTICIPATED TO COME FROM THE RIGHT SIDE OF 2B (I.E. RF, RCF, 2B, 1B).

A BASE RUNNER ADVANCING FROM 2B TO 3B SHOULD RUN TO THE LEFT OF 3B IF THE THROW IS ANTICIPATED TO COME FROM THE LEFT SIDE OF 2B (I.E. LCF, LF, SS, 3B).

14.2.1 In the event that a base runner has run over, past or by either side of 2B and 3B in order to avoid contact, the base runner shall be declared "SAFE" if in the Umpire's judgment the base runner reached 2B or 3B before a fielder was in possession of the ball while touching the base or "OUT" if a fielder was in possession of the ball while touching the base before the base runner reached the base.

14.2.2 If a base runner has rounded a base and proceeded in a direct line toward the next base, he/she is subject to being tagged "OUT" under regular ASA Rules.

14.2.3 In the event that a base runner has run over, past or by either side of 2B and 3B, the base runner may not advance to the next base without first returning to and touching the overrun base.

14.3. All initial plays at 2B and 3B shall be deemed "force outs". Accordingly, in addition to being tagged out, a base runner shall be declared "OUT" if:

(a) the fielder had possession of the ball while in contact with the base BEFORE the runner has reached that base;

AND

(b) the base runner has crossed the Commitment Line (drawn or imaginary) which is halfway between 1B and 2B or 2B and 3B, as the case may be.

14.4 Rule 14 is designed to reduce the incidence of "tag" plays on the base paths but does not preclude fielders from tagging runners under regular ASA Rules.

[CLARIFICATION]: A base runner who is "returning" to a base after having legally rounded that base **MUST** be tagged and cannot be forced out except if he/she would be a "force out" under normal ASA Rules. For example, a player who rounds 2B base towards 3B and then returns to 2B must be tagged out but a runner who attempts to tag up and mistakenly leaves early and has to return to the base can be forced out.