

## **2011 EMASS SENIOR SOFTBALL PLAYING RULES**

**[ADOPTED BY EMASS BOARD, APRIL-2011]**

[NOTE: Unless a Rule is specifically identified as only American, National and/or Atlantic, the 2011 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 2011 EMASS SENIOR SOFTBALL PLAYING RULES set forth below, replace 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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: RESERVED**

### **RULE 4: FIVE RUN RULE**

4.1 During innings 1 - 6, the batting team may score a maximum of 5 runs only. In the 7<sup>th</sup> inning and any subsequent extra innings there is no limitation.

### **RULE 5: MERCY RULE/EXTRA INNINGS/GAME PLAY**

5.1 If either team is trailing by 12 runs or more at any time after the 5<sup>th</sup> inning is complete and/or the 6<sup>th</sup> inning is complete (4.5 or 5.5 innings if the home team is ahead), the team that is losing shall have the right to invoke the Mercy Rule and declare the game over.

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

5.2.1 There shall be no infield warm-ups after the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning UNLESS there is a new player at the position who shall be entitled to up to 2 throws but such warm-up **must** be terminated immediately following the permitted warm-up pitches.

5.2.1.1 In the event of a violation of the warm-up rule or any other reason, the Umpire shall have the discretion of awarding a ball to the batter if the batter is in the batter's box and ready to receive the pitch and the defensive team is not ready to play.

5.2.1.2 The Umpire shall have the discretion of awarding a strike to the pitcher if the pitcher is in possession of the game ball on the rubber and is ready to deliver a pitch and all permitted warm-ups are completed and there is no batter ready to take his/her place in the batter's box. The Umpire shall have the discretion of awarding a ball to the batter if the batter is in the batter's box and ready to receive a pitch and 10 seconds have passed since the umpire indicated to the pitcher to "pitch".

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.

#### **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 15 minutes after the original starting time for the 1st game (i.e. the shorthanded team will have 15 minutes to reach the required number of players to avoid a forfeit).

6.2 If, at the starting time of a game, a team has less than 9 players available, the 1st game of the doubleheader will be delayed for 10 minutes. If after 10 minutes, the shorthanded team still has less than 9 players the 1st game shall be declared a forfeit in favor of the team that is not shorthanded. If neither team has 9 players available, the game shall be declared a double forfeit.

**6.3 If at the beginning of any game a team has only 9 or 10 players, the opposing team SHALL NOT provide a catcher or any other player to the shorthanded team.**

#### **RULE 7: BAT THROWING**

7.1 Any player who intentionally throws his bat in frustration or anger shall be ejected from the game and shall not be permitted to play the remainder of that day.

7.2 Any player who inadvertently throws his bat (during an at bat) in a manner which could result in the catcher, umpire or any other player being struck during an at bat shall be declared out, the ball shall be declared a "dead ball" and all runners shall return to the base previously occupied. Any player who throws his bat as above a second time shall be ejected from the game and shall not be permitted to play the remainder of that day.

#### **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.

8.1.1 **[AMERICAN]** In an effort to avoid possible disputes and rules violations, Managers will exchange lineups prior to the start of all regular season and playoff games.

8.1.2 **[ATLANTIC/NATIONAL]** Prior to the commencement of any game, any Manager may request that the opposing Manager provide a copy of the team's line-up.

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 (which **must 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 DIVISION POLICY]** Although defensive playing time is generally at the discretion of the Manager of each team, the Board of Directors has adopted a policy guideline that Managers of Atlantic Division teams should ensure that each available player has the opportunity to play at least 4 innings defensively. There is no guarantee that any player shall play a specific defensive position and the Manager has the discretion to place players in positions as he/she sees fit. Any player who believes that he/she is not receiving a reasonable 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 and/or the Rules Coordinator.

8.4 **[NATIONAL DIVISION POLICY]** Although defensive playing time is **solely** at the discretion of the Manager of each team, the Board of Directors has adopted a general policy guideline that Managers of National Division teams should endeavor, to the extent reasonable under competitive circumstances, to provide each available player the opportunity to play a fair amount of time defensively. There is no guarantee that any player shall play a specific defensive position and the Manager has the discretion to place players in positions as he/she sees fit. Any player who believes that the Manager is not abiding the general policy is ENCOURAGED to discuss the matter directly with his/her Manager AND to report this matter to 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 **NOT** entitled to a "courtesy foul ball". That is, the 1st foul after the batter has 2 strikes is considered a 3rd strike and the batter is "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 shall be permitted ONLY under the following conditions:

- (a) A player requests the use of a Courtesy Runner PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE FIRST GAME; and
- (b) The player has a medical affliction, physical injury or other physical impairment which prevents him/her from reasonably running the bases. Lack of running speed or lack of general physical conditioning is not a permitted reason to use a Courtesy Runner; and
- (c) **PRIOR** to the commencement of the first game, the Manager has specifically identified to the opposing Manager the physically impaired player who has REQUESTED the use a Courtesy Runner and the specific nature of the physical injury or impairment.

11.1.1 Any player utilizing a Courtesy Runner once must continue to use a Courtesy Runner the entire playing day.

11.1.2 The Courtesy Runner shall always be the player who made the **last out** even if that player has already served as a Courtesy Runner that inning. However, no player is required to be a Courtesy Runner more than 2x in one inning. In such event, the Courtesy Runner shall be the player who made the out previously to the first Courtesy Runner.

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.

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

11.2.4 Any player who has utilized a Courtesy Runner from the bases at any time may not, at any subsequent at bat during the playing day, 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 (except as set forth in 11.1.2).

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 or an outfielder. 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. Provided, however, if in the umpire's discretion, the throw had no reasonable chance of causing a collision of first base, the umpire may elect not to enforce the automatic out. For example, a throw made to first base which arrives AFTER the batter-runner has crossed first base.

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 or otherwise affected the play, 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 Sliding is allowed into and returning to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base, and returning to 1<sup>st</sup> base. The base runner shall be declared "OUT" if he/she slides into first base or home plate.

### **RULE 14: MISCELLANEOUS EMASS POLICIES:**

14.1 Weather related and other official cancellations shall be made, to the extent possible, by the respective Division Coordinators prior to the time games are scheduled to begin and shall be communicated to all Managers. This determination shall apply to all teams in the Division unless the Division Coordinator has indicated otherwise.

14.2 In the event that the Division Coordinator has not elected to cancel games, but upon arriving at the field a Manager reasonably believes in good faith that it would be unsafe to play, he may elect not to play the scheduled games. If both Managers have not agreed, the Manager who does not agree with the cancellation may file a written protest with the Rules Committee for a final determination as to whether the cancellation was reasonable and made in good faith.

14.3 Regular season games cancelled due to inclement weather, poor field conditions or any other reason will not be rescheduled.