



## ***RULES AND REGULATIONS***

*Effective January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023*

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# SECTION 1 - OVERVIEW

## A. Responsibility

1. The Rules and Regulations Committee of the Board of Directors (the "Board") of the 4S Ranch Girls Softball League, Inc. (the "League" or "4S Softball") has responsibility for reviewing and interpreting the rules and regulations found herein and making recommendations for changes to the Board. The Rules and Regulations Committee consists of the members of the Rules, Regulations, and Coaching Committee identified in Section 7.1 of the League's Bylaws (also referred to herein as the Rules Committee). The Board shall have the responsibility for adopting and amending these rules and regulations, and through its selected designees, shall have the responsibility for enforcing these rules and regulations.

## B. Interpretations and Appeals of Rules and Regulations

1. A request for an explanation or interpretation of a rule, or an appeal of a decision or interpretation of a rule made by a League representative, shall be made in writing, and directed to the Head of Divisions, as chairperson of the Rules Committee. The request or appeal shall cite the relevant rule at issue and the specific concern of the requestor or appellant.
2. All rule explanations, interpretations and decisions on appeals made by the Rules Committee are final. In the case of a ruling on the appeal of a decision or interpretation made by a League representative, the Rules Committee shall forward a written response to the appellant and other parties involved and report their action to the Board.
3. In making rule interpretations and decisions, the Rules Committee shall consider and follow the intent of the rule in trying to reach a fair and equitable decision.

## C. Application of Rules and Regulations

1. Except as otherwise provided, Sections 2 through 6 apply to the League's Spring Recreational Season. Section 7 applies to the League's B Select program. Section 8 Applies to the League's All Star Season. Section 9 applies to the League's Winterball Season.
2. All rules and regulations found in Sections 2 through 6 shall apply to the governing of the All Star and Winterball programs unless superseded in Sections 8 or 9.

## D. USA Softball Southern California Code of Conduct

1. The League and its members will also abide by the USA Softball Southern California Code of Conduct in addition to the Rules and Regulations as set forth in this document.

# SECTION 2 - REGISTRATION

## A. Responsibility

1. The League's Registration Director has responsibility for conducting the League's registration process. Any questions, comments, concerns, or other correspondence regarding registration should be directed to the Registration Director. In making any discretionary decisions, the Player Agent's primary duty shall be to act in the interest of fair play and team equity.

## B. Eligibility

1. The League is open to girls with a "League Age" of five through fourteen (5-14). A majority of girls reside within the boundaries of or attending school within the Poway Unified School District ("PUSD"), but the league accepts girls from all areas of San Diego. "League Age" is determined as the girl's age as of 12:00 AM, January 1st of the calendar year season. The Player Agent can approve four year olds that would like to play based on prior sports experience.
2. A "Player" is a girl whose registration with the League is current.
3. If any Player, parent or guardian discloses the existence of a physical or medical condition that may create a safety risk, or if the existence of such condition is apparent or evident, the League may require that the Player provide a medical certification, to the Player Agent, clearing her to play before participating, or continuing to participate, in the League's activities.
4. Player eligibility is also governed by the USA Softball Yellow book ([www.usasoftballsocal.com](http://www.usasoftballsocal.com)) and covers eligibility issues regarding travel and high school players. Final Player eligibility is determined by the Player Agent.

## C. Divisions

1. The League is separated into divisions in accordance with the USA SOFTBALL age guidelines.
2. Depending on the number of registrants, the League shall offer the following intramural divisions of play:
  - a. T-Ball four, five, and six (4-6) year olds
  - b. 8U seven and eight (7-8) year olds
  - c. 10U nine and ten (9-10) year olds
  - d. 12U eleven and twelve (11-12) year olds
  - e. 14U thirteen and fourteen (13-14) year olds

The League shall make an effort to accommodate thirteen- and fourteen-year-old girls through the establishment of a 14U team to compete against teams in this same age division from other leagues around San Diego County. The formation of such a team shall depend upon the number of registrants and the availability of a qualified coach.

## D. Registration Process

1. Registration for the League's Spring Recreational Season shall start in October and run into January. Registrations shall be accepted electronically through the League's website at [www.4Ssoftball.com](http://www.4Ssoftball.com). The League shall make every effort to place on a team every girl registering within the League's deadlines and meeting the League's eligibility requirements.

2. Special placement requests shall be submitted electronically, along with an explanation for the request, at the time of registration. There is no guarantee that special requests outside of the League's rules and regulations described herein shall be granted. The Player Agent determines final Player placement.
3. Upon registration, each participant must provide documentation in a form acceptable to the Player Agent as to the Player's age. Any documents provided to the League shall only be disclosed to third parties as determined to be necessary.
4. The League shall accept late registration of Players until such date established by the Board, after which no registrations shall be accepted, nor team assignments allowed. Late registrants shall be assigned to a team in accordance with the rules and regulations described herein.
5. No Player shall be permitted to participate in any team function without a signed registration form and liability release, proof of age.

## **E. Fees and Refunds**

1. A registration fee is required to participate in the League. All such fees shall be approved by the Board and paid before a date established by the Board.
2. The Treasurer shall forward requests for financial aid to the Executive Board for approval and notify requesters of the Executive Board's decision.
3. A full refund shall be made to any Player that is not assigned to a team or a Player resigning prior to a team assignment. No refunds will be granted once teams are announced. A Player resigning from her assigned team will be ineligible for reinstatement to any team in any division for the remainder of that season. The Recreational season, the All Star season and the Winterball season are considered separate seasons.
4. Division 14U only: The League shall refund the registration fee of a 14U Player if she subsequently makes a high school team.

## SECTION 3 – COACHING STAFF

### A. Responsibility

1. The League's Rules, Regulations & Coaching Committee has responsibility for oversight of the coaching staff, which includes Managers and any other coaches who will be directing play on the field during a game. The Rules, Regulations & Coaching Committee shall act in accordance with the League's Bylaws, the rules and regulations herein, and at the direction of the Board or its designees. Any questions, comments, concerns, or other correspondence regarding coaches, assistants, or other team officials should be directed to the appropriate Division Coordinator, who will in turn, discuss it with the Head of Division Coordinators, as Chairman of the Rules, Regulations & Coaching Committee. All decisions shall be made in the best interests of all participants within the League.

### B. Coach Selection

1. The Rules, Regulations, & Coaching Committee is responsible for recruiting and recommending to the Board of Directors the coaching staff for all of the League's teams. This includes Managers and any other coaches who will be directing play on the field during a game. The Board shall evaluate all coaching staff recommendations and appoint the manager and approve all manager recommended coaches. The Committee shall not communicate coaching appointments prior to receiving permission from the Board.
2. Opportunities to coach shall be advertised by the Board to attract as many well-qualified candidates as possible. All applicants for Manager and Assistant Manager (Coach) must complete an application on our website.
3. Managers and Assistant Managers must be at least eighteen (18) years of age. The primary qualities sought in coaches include the following:
  - a. Dedication to providing a positive experience for all Players while stressing teamwork and personal responsibility.
  - b. Willingness to contribute to and support the League and the welfare of all its participants beyond coaching.
  - c. Ability to reflect a positive image of 4S Softball, its teams, and its Players; and
  - d. Knowledge of the game and the ability to teach the game.
4. The recommendations of the Rules, Regulations, and Coaching Committee shall be presented to the Board as soon as possible prior to the first scheduled coaches training date or assessment date. The Rules, Regulations, and Coaching Committee shall notify coaches immediately upon receiving permission from the Board. Any subsequent recommendations for the coaching staff shall be presented to the Board for approval.
  - a. All Manager's applications will be provided to the Board for review.
  - b. Managers will be selected based on a vote by the Voting Members of the Board.
5. Managers in all divisions are permitted to have one designated Assistant Manager. The daughter(s) of the Manager and designated Assistant Manager shall be reserved to that team and known as a "Reserved Player" or "Reserved Players." A Manager's coaches will be selected by the respective Manager, subject to objection by the Rules, Regulations, and Coaching Committee and/or Board.
6. Any adult who will assist in the dugout or on the field during practices or games will be required to have a background check, complete SafeSport training, and receive concussion certification as required by USA SOFTBALL guidelines. The League will pay for the background check for the Manager and up to three (3) Coaches. Any individual who refuses to sign the background check consent form is ineligible to hold a coaching position within the League. Once the background check has been successfully completed, and the coach or manager is cleared to be a coach within 4S Softball, that coach will be declared "Certified" by

the League. Such certification may be withdrawn by the Board in its sole discretion.

## C. Coaching Responsibilities and Conduct

1. All Managers, Coaches and their staffs are representatives of the League and, as such, are expected to support the League and the Board in the following manner:
  - a. Know the [League Bylaws](#), the rules and regulations herein, and the USA SOFTBALL rules governing play;
  - b. Cooperate with Board members and their designees by responding promptly to inquiries or requests for information;
  - c. Support and implement all League objectives, policies, rules, and regulations regardless of personal views;
  - d. Communicate these objectives and policies to Players and their parents or guardians;
  - e. Communicate with the appropriate Division Coordinator regarding coaching-related issues; and
  - f. Maintain a positive, team-oriented approach to coaching and in working with Players and their parents or guardians.
2. The Manager is responsible for the overall operation of the team and is expected to be actively involved in a majority of the team's activities. Managers who are not actively participating may be subject to disciplinary action and possible removal. The duties and responsibilities of the Manager include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. Evaluation of players at skills evaluations;
  - b. Participating in the team selection process as required;
  - c. Picking up, maintaining and returning the League issued team equipment;
  - d. Communicate regularly with parents, including holding a formal team meeting for parents and guardians to set expectations for the season before the second scheduled practice;
  - e. Holding regular post game / practice summary meetings;
  - f. Conducting practices and games;
  - g. Ensuring player safety before, during and after practices and games;
  - h. Attending coaching and player training and clinics;
  - i. Ensuring that the coaching staff is properly trained and that at least one member of the coaching staff or team parent attends the mandatory League safety training;
  - j. Completes online concussion training;
  - k. Designating a team parent, scorekeeper, etc. to assist with League related team responsibilities; and
  - l. Preparing, maintaining and breaking down the fields before and after games and practices.
3. Managers shall contact their respective Division Coordinator concerning questions about League rules, player misconduct, parental problems, or any other matter pertaining to the operation of their team. Any matter that a Manager would like brought to the attention of the Board is to be reported to the Division Coordinator, who is responsible for placing the matter on the Board's agenda at their next regular meeting. Any matter that a Manager may have regarding a Division Coordinator can be reported to any member of the Executive Board.
4. All coaching candidates shall sign the "Code of Conduct" in order to be eligible for appointment.
5. Managers and their coaching staff are to maintain professional conduct at all times and shall report all incidents of coaching misconduct as described herein to the Division Coordinator within twenty-four (24) hours.
6. At the parent and guardian meeting before the team's second scheduled practice the Manager shall explain, in detail, his or her coaching philosophy and his or her policies, team rules, and any other topics or League information as instructed by the League during the coaches' training program.
7. Excessive physical exercise, mental, physical or verbal abuse, the use of profanity, or the unsportsmanlike conduct by any member of the coaching staff toward the players, other coaches, parents or guardians, or umpires is strictly forbidden regardless of any personal relationships. If a coach cannot successfully deal with a player, coach, or parent or guardian, the coach shall direct this issue to the Division Coordinator.



8. The Manager shall report any of the following within twenty-four (24) hours to the Division Coordinator and the Player Agent: poor attendance of a player (three or more unexcused absences as described herein), a benching of a player resulting from a player misconduct as defined in Section 5(C)1., a resignation or anticipated resignation of a player, a player request to transfer to another team, severe injuries, players chronically left unattended by parents, the physical, mental or verbal abuse of a player on any team, or the ejection of a player, member of the coaching staff, parent or guardian or spectator affiliated with the team from a game.
9. The Manager shall report to the Division Coordinator and the Player Agent any action that may affect a change in the team roster, including requests for transfer, drops, disciplinary actions, etc. Roster changes cannot be made by anyone other than the Player Agent, with approval of the Division Coordinator. Any such roster change not made by the Player Agent and approved by the Division Coordinator shall result in the subject player being deemed an "Ineligible Player."
10. The Manager shall report to the Division Coordinator and the Player Agent any player who has three unexcused absences (games and/or practices). Advanced planned family events, other sport activities, school or religious activities, and illnesses or injuries communicated to the Manager in advance of the absence are considered excused absences.
11. The Manager is responsible for ensuring the safety of the players, and that players shall not be left unattended before or after a practice or game. If a player continually has a problem with parent drop-offs or pick-ups, the Manager shall report the situation to the Division Coordinator and the Player Agent.
12. Only coaches who are "Certified" (as described herein) are permitted to conduct a practice. If a coach is not available, for whatever reasons, no practice shall take place. Failure to abide by this rule may result in the removal of the Manager from the team.

#### **D. Disciplinary Action and Removal**

1. Coaching misconduct includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:
  - a. Poor sportsmanship;
  - b. Inappropriate cheers or comments that demean or otherwise make fun of girls on the opposing team;
  - c. Chronic absences from coaches meetings, clinics, team practices and/or games;
  - d. Foul and/or abusive language;
  - e. Use or influence of alcohol, tobacco products, or illegal drugs at or around any playing or practice facility, including parking areas;
  - f. Behavior displaying a lack of moral character;
  - g. Mental, verbal and/or physical abuse of a player, parent, spectator, or game official;
  - h. Multiple ejections from games involving 4S Softball teams; and
  - i. Blatant, purposeful, or multiple violations of 4S Softball or USA SOFTBALL rules.
2. Allegations of coaching misconduct shall be made in writing to the appropriate Division Coordinator or to any member of the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall act upon allegations of misconduct within seven (7) days. Disciplinary action may include an oral or written reprimand, suspension, removal, or any other penalty the Executive Board might impose. Any decision of the Executive Board is final and cannot be appealed. A report of any action taken by the Executive Board shall be filed with the Secretary. In addition, the Executive Board may forward a recommendation to the Board for revocation of League membership in accordance with the League Bylaws.
3. Any member of the coaching staff who is ejected from a game involving any 4S Softball sanctioned team shall be suspended for the remainder of the game in progress and the following game, unless tournament rules differ. The ejected coach has one minute to leave the premises, removing himself or herself from sight and sound or the game shall be forfeited at the umpire's discretion. The ejected coach may have no contact with the members of the team during the pre- or post-game activities of either game for which he or she is suspended. It is the responsibility of the Manager, or acting Manager, or his or her designee, to make sure the ejected party leaves the premises. The Division Coordinator and the Player Agent shall be

notified by the Manager, and a report shall be made by the Division Coordinator to the Board. If any coach is ejected from a game the coach will be required to attend a meeting with the Executive Board to explain the circumstances and the Executive Board will have the discretion to handle the situation as it deems best.

4. Any member of the coaching staff ejected from a second game within the same season involving any 4S Softball sanctioned team, may, at the discretion of the Rules, Regulations & Coaching Committee and approval of the Executive Board, be removed from the coaching staff and/or suspended from attending any games in which a 4S Softball team is participating for the rest of the same season. The Recreational season, the All Star season and the Winterball season are considered separate seasons.
5. Any Manager who resigns voluntarily shall not be reinstated in any division on any team for that season. The Recreational season, the All Star season and the Winterball season are considered separate seasons.
6. 4S Ranch Girls Softball Association takes retaliation/intimidation very seriously. Retaliation/Intimidation against any individual(s) for reporting rules and regulation violations, harassment, discrimination, and/ or for participating in an investigation of a claim is a serious violation and will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **E. Training**

1. Managers, and any other coaching staff members included by the Rules, Regulations & Coaching Committee, are required to attend meetings, clinics, and training programs conducted by the League or as directed by the League, unless excused by the Rules, Regulations & Coaching Committee. Failure to do so may result in removal from the coaching staff for that season. The Recreational season, the All Star season and the Winterball season are considered separate seasons.

## **F. Fields and Equipment**

1. Due to liability concerns and the limited number of fields, teams shall practice and play on assigned fields both during practices and regular season games. The Scheduling Director must approve any use of fields other than those assigned.
2. Any cancellation of practices or games should be reported to the Scheduling Director and the County as soon as possible.
3. The Manager is financially responsible for his or her team equipment. All equipment issued to team officials or Players must be returned to the League at the conclusion of the last game or at any other such time as the Equipment Director directs.
4. Equipment will be issued to and returned by the Manager, or another member of the coaching staff designated by the Manager. If the Manager or designated person, cannot be at the place and time designated by the Equipment Director, other arrangements must be made.

## **G. Safety**

1. The Division Coordinator and the coaching staff are responsible for the players wearing proper clothing, using safety equipment properly, and using safe practices of play at all team functions to minimize chances of injury.
2. The Manager shall report to the Division Coordinator and Player Agent, who shall then timely report to the League Secretary, any injuries occurring during a team event which results in a missed game or practice or which requires a doctor's attention, within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident. The coaching staff shall also report any unsafe playing conditions to the Field Director immediately.
3. We strongly recommend the use of a fielding mask when playing in the infield for all divisions. However, fielding masks must be worn by pitchers in all divisions and for all infield positions in 6U, 8U, and 10U. If a

player does not wear a fielding mask, she cannot play in the infield. The playing requirements of Sections 6.F.3.i, 6.F.4.d, 6.F.5.e, and 6.F.6.d (playing at least 1 inning in the infield) do not apply to a player that does not have a fielding mask available to use for the game.

# SECTION 4 – TEAM SELECTION AND PLAYER PLACEMENT

## A. Responsibility

1. The League's Division Coordinators and the Player Agent have responsibility for conducting the League's team selection and player placement process. The Division Coordinators and the Player Agent shall act in accordance with the [League Bylaws](#), the rules and regulations herein, and at the direction of the Board or its designees. Any questions, comments, concerns, or other correspondence regarding team selection and Player placement should be directed to the Division Coordinators or the Player Agent. In making any discretionary decisions, the Division Coordinators' and Player Agent's primary duty shall be to act in the interest of fair play and team equity.

## B. Team Selection and Player Placement Policies

1. It is not the policy of 4S Softball to grant requests for placement (other than in T-Ball) with or within a specific division, team, coach, or other player.
2. It may be necessary, in order to fill out teams or coaching positions in an upper age division, or to place an advanced player at an appropriate skill level, to allow a small number of qualified players to be moved to a more advanced division. Placement in an upper division requires that all of the following criteria be met:
  - a. A player must have the permission of the parent or guardian;
  - b. A player **must** attend the player skills evaluation in the upper division AND the lower division, and must
    - rank in the top 25% of the upper division; or
    - rank in the top 50% of the upper division AND her parent must agree and be selected to manage a team in the upper division for that recreational season.
  - c. Failure to attend the lower division assessments requires prior approval by the Executive Board.
3. It may be necessary, due to safety considerations, to allow players lacking sufficient softball experience to be placed in a lower age division. Placement in a lower division requires that all of the following criteria be met:
  - a. A player must have the permission of the parent or guardian;
  - b. A notification from a League representative associated with the upper division that there is a safety concern; and
  - c. A player must have the consent of the Player Agent and the Division Coordinators involved.
4. The number of Players on each team shall vary by division and is typically as follows:

a. T-Ball Division	seven through ten (7-10) players
b. 8U	ten through thirteen (10-13) players
c. 10U	ten through thirteen (10-13) players
d. 12U	ten through twelve (10-13) players
e. 14U	ten through thirteen (10-13) players
5. The final number of players per team shall be determined by the Rules Committee, with input from the Division Coordinators and will be approved by the Board.

## **C. Player Evaluations**

1. The League shall conduct a skills evaluation for all players eligible for the draft. The Division Coordinators, with the assistance of the Player Agent, shall be responsible to organize and conduct the skills evaluation for their respective divisions. It is strongly recommended that all players attend the skills evaluation session as it provides the best setting for evaluation by all coaches participating in the season.
2. All players should attend the skills evaluation session designated for their age group regardless of any pending request to play in another division, except as otherwise provided herein. EXCEPTION: Players approved to play in a lower division may attend the skills evaluation session for the lower division only.
3. T-Ball shall not use a draft for team selection and therefore shall not require a skills evaluation process.
4. Reserved Players are required to participate in the player skills evaluation. If they do not attend, a score will be assigned to the Reserved Player for the draft by the Rules, Regulations and Coaching Committee.
5. The Director of Development shall develop and provide to the Board for approval the evaluation criteria (how to score). The following individuals shall assess:
  - a. Division Coordinator for that Division
  - b. Head of Divisions
  - c. Player Agent
  - d. Development Director; and
  - e. Managers for that division or a single representative for that Manager.
  - f. Additional team representatives may attend the assessments but shall not submit an assessment score for any player.
6. A minimum of five assessors are required to conduct player evaluation.
7. The Player Agent and Registration Director will combine all assessors equally to determine a score for each player and rank all players 1-n. Player Agent shall make assessment sheets available to the Executive Board. Executive Board will determine if any assessment sheet shall be withdrawn due to perceived egregious scoring.

## **D. Player Assignment Procedures for T-Ball Division**

1. Player assignments shall be conducted by the Player Agent and Division Coordinator and shall be finalized only after all other division drafts have taken place.
2. The Player Agent and Division Coordinator shall first assign the Reserved Players and make a best effort to grant special requests for team player or coach assignments. Remaining Players shall be assigned by school and then at random.
3. Siblings within the same division shall be placed together unless otherwise requested by the parent or guardian.

## **E. Player Draft Rules and Procedures for all other divisions (8U, 10U, 12U, 14U)**

1. Player assignments shall be determined by player draft when there are enough players for two (2) or more teams. The Player Agent and the Division Coordinator shall conduct the player draft.
2. Player drafts shall be conducted after the final player skills evaluation at a time and place designated by the Player Agent.
3. The draft room shall consist of the Player Agent (moderates the draft), respective Division Coordinator,

Rules Committee representative(s), Registration Director, and up to two representatives from each team (i.e., manager and one assistant coach).

4. Prior to the start of the draft the Player Agent must announce or provide the following:
  - a. The team representatives and other draft officials in attendance;
  - b. A complete draft roster of all eligible players with their 1-n rankings from assessments;
  - c. A listing of pitchers and catchers (catchers list not applicable for 8U);
  - d. A listing of siblings to be drafted together; and
  - e. A listing of the players and the number of available roster slots for players requesting and eligible to move up.
5. The Player Agent shall appoint an acting team representative to draft for any team that does not have a representative present. The appointed representative shall not have an interest in the division. No other players, parents or guardians, or spectators are permitted in the draft room except as permitted herein.
6. The Player Agent shall provide team representatives with a draft roster of eligible players. It shall also include players from other divisions who have met the criteria for consideration of selection to the subject division.
7. The Player Agent shall inform team representatives of all special requests and advise representatives that they are not required to honor these requests during the draft, but should try to accommodate them if at all possible.
8. All players that pitch are encouraged to assess as a pitcher. If a player does not assess as a pitcher (as she does not want to be a primary pitcher), but was known to pitch in a significant number of games in the prior year, then they shall be denoted as a pitcher for the draft. A list of all such pitchers will be discussed with coaches of each division.
9. All players that catch are encouraged to assess as a catcher. If a player does not assess as a catcher (as she does not want to be a primary catcher), but is known to catch in a significant number of games in the prior year, then they shall be denoted as a catcher for the draft. A list of all such catchers will be discussed with coaches of each division.
10. Siblings eligible for draft within the same division shall be drafted together unless otherwise requested by the parent or guardian. Prior to the draft, the coaches and team representatives in attendance and familiar with the siblings' skill sets will discuss the projected round of the draft in which each sibling is likely to be drafted so each coach/team representative can plan their draft accordingly.
11. Prior to starting the draft for each division, the Player Agent and Division Coordinator shall determine the number of teams to be fielded in the division.
12. During assessments, coaches/team representatives are requested to rank each pitcher and catcher, with 1 being the highest ranked pitcher/catcher. The highest and lowest rankings, and the ranking given by any Coach for his/her own daughter, will not be counted and all other rankings will be averaged to determine a pitcher's or catcher's ranking ("Ranked" or "Ranking"). Those Rankings shall be shared with all Coaches and team representatives at the draft and they may use those Rankings as a resource during the selection process.
13. The Coach/ team representative with the first selection may select any pitcher, regardless of the Ranking. The team with the second selection may then select any pitcher, regardless of the Ranking, and so on, until each team in the division has made their Pitcher Round pitcher selection.
14. The initial Round of the draft shall be for the selection of pitchers only ("Pitcher Round"). Each team will select one (1) pitcher during the Pitcher Round. The intent of this Pitcher Round selection is to allocate the pitching talent among the teams and minimize the possibility that a team will be fielded without a recognized pitcher; or a player that is designated as of the time of the draft as a "Ranked" pitcher (as defined below).

15. In the event a Coach has a daughter who is a League-recognized pitcher, the Coach must draft his/her daughter in the Pitcher Round, however, if the daughter/Player is Ranked lower than the total number of teams to be fielded for that division as determined at the time of the draft, Plus one (1), then the Coach is not required to draft his/her daughter in the Pitcher Round but must draft the daughter as a Reserved Player as defined below. For example, if a division is fielding 5 teams and the Coach's daughter is not Ranked as a top six (6) pitcher (the total number of teams, plus one (1)), the Coach is not required to take his/her daughter in the Pitcher Round, but must draft her no later than the Reserved Player round.

The intent of this section is to promote the likelihood that each team will receive at least one (1) pitcher that is considered to be a top pitcher during the Pitcher Round based on the overall pitchers available in the draft. It is not intended to promote Ranking of pitchers in a manner inconsistent with a pitcher's actual or projected abilities for the season, or to unduly benefit or harm a Coach's draft slot in the First Round.

As a result, in the event a majority of the Division Coordinator, Player Agent and those coaches/team representatives in attendance at the draft determine prior to the start of the Pitcher Round that because of the skillset of the Ranked pitchers, enforcing the Plus 1 rule would unduly harm a Coach's First Round selection and ability to draft a top pitcher, then the Plus 1 rule will not be enforced and the Coach may select any available pitcher when his/her Pitcher Round selection arises, and is only required to draft his/her daughter if she is Ranked equal to or better than the number of teams in the division.

16. For all teams that do not have a Reserved Player that is a pitcher ranked in the top number of teams to be fielded in that division, the team with the lowest scoring non-pitcher Reserved Players will go first in selecting a pitcher. The next lowest scoring team will pick second and so forth until each team has a first round pitcher. Lowest score is determined as the lowest combined Reserved Player scores.
17. For 10U, 12U, and 14U, the next subsequent Round of the draft shall be for the selection of catchers only ("Catcher Round"). Each team with a non-Reserved Catcher will select one (1) catcher during the Catcher Round. The intent of this Catcher Round selection is to allocate the catching talent among the teams and minimize the possibility that a team will be fielded without a recognized catcher; or a player that is designated as of the time of the draft as a "Ranked" catcher (in the same manner as described above for pitchers). Team, with no non-Reserved Catcher, with the lowest ranked Pitcher will have first selection. The next pick will be by the non-Reserved Catcher team with the next lowest Pitcher score on so on.
18. For 12U and 14U only: After the 2<sup>nd</sup> Round, another Pitcher Round will commence with the order being in reverse order of 1<sup>st</sup> Pitcher Rankings.
19. Selected Pitchers, Catchers and Reserved Players will be slotted in the First through N Rounds (Where N is the total number of rounds) based on their overall rankings.
20. If a single team has two reserved players that are ranked in the First Round (and thus, be slotted in the First and Second Rounds), then that team will forfeit their Third Round pick. In other words, they will not select another player until the Fourth Round.
21. After the Pitcher Round(s) and Catcher Round (if applicable) are complete, scores will be updated and the team with the lowest number of points through the Pitcher and Catcher Rounds only will have the first selection in the First Round. Reserved players slotted for other rounds do not count toward these scores. The following teams will select based on the next lowest score of the Pitcher and Catcher Rounds until the First Round is complete. All pitchers and catchers not drafted in the Pitcher or Catcher Rounds, respectively, are part of the draft beginning with the First Round, regardless of how they Ranked.
22. The "snake" draft system shall be used during the draft beginning with the Second Round. With the picking order determined from #18 above, the team picking last in the current Round will pick first in subsequent round and picks will be made in reverse order. For example, subsequent odd numbered rounds will be identical to Round 1. Similarly, subsequent even numbered rounds will be similar to Round 2.
23. Each team representative shall be given two (2) minutes to make his or her selection. The Player Agent enforces time limits. Failure to select a player in the two minute time period will result in the next highest

ranked player being automatically drafted to the team.

24. Teams having a Reserved Player(s) not otherwise drafted in the First or Second Round shall have that player be slotted into the appropriate Round based on their score. For example, if a Reserved Player was ranked #44 out of 60 girls and we are fielding 6 teams, the Reserved Player will be slotted into the Fifth Round.
25. If a division does not have a sufficient number of pitchers and catchers to accommodate the number of teams to be formed, the Player Agent and Division Coordinator may decide to forego a Pitcher and/or Catcher Round, and proceed directly to the First Round and the snake process.
26. The draft is completed when all eligible players have been assigned to a team and each team has at least the minimum number of players to form a roster. Note that players desiring to play up or down a division must meet the requirements described herein in order to be eligible to be drafted. Players otherwise meeting the requirements to play down a division must be drafted; players otherwise meeting the requirements and desiring to play up a division are not required to be drafted in the upper age division. The Player Agent will strive to ensure that the total score per team (as defined as the ranking of each player divided by the number of players on each team) is comparable for all teams.
27. Upon completion of the draft, trades among teams may be submitted until noon the day following the completion of the draft. All trades are subject to approval by both the Player Agent and the Division Coordinator. All trades will be final and no trades shall be requested or accepted after this period unless directed by the Player Agent. Trades shall be fair and not be used to circumvent any of the procedures intended to provide equity and fairness during the draft.
28. All team rosters are subject to approval by the Player Agent and the Division Coordinator involved. Roster changes may be made if any clear and egregious imbalances occurred during the draft process, at the discretion of the Player Agent and the Division Coordinator involved.
29. The Player Agent will compile a list of teams for Board approval. Under no circumstances shall players be notified of their selection until the Player Agent has received Board approval and issued approved team rosters to the Managers. Upon notification of roster approval, Managers shall notify their players within forty-eight (48) hours.

## **F. Post-Draft Registrations and Roster Changes**

1. All Managers within the division shall be notified when a player registers for the League after the draft is complete. Players registering after the draft is complete shall be placed on teams based on the following criteria, as determined by the Player Agent and Division Director:
  - a. Number of players on a team;
  - b. Known skills and abilities; and
  - c. Team balance.
2. The parents or guardians of a Player may submit a written request to the Player Agent, within two (2) days of notification of team assignment, requesting that the Player be placed on another team and providing a reason for the request. The Player Agent, assisted by the Division Coordinator, shall determine whether the situation warrants reassignment, and if necessary, will attempt to make accommodations assuming the change does not significantly disrupt the team(s) and/or families affected by a trade or transfer.
3. In the event that the League fails to obtain adequate coaching for any team in the League, that team shall be disbanded and the Players placed on another team or a refund given. The Player Agent, assisted by the Division Coordinator, shall place Players wishing to continue to play on other teams, subject to roster availability and in the interest of fair play and team equity.
4. The Player Agent and Division Coordinator must approve any roster change. Any such reassignment or placement of a player under this subsection 4(F) shall be done only with the approval of the Rules,



Regulations, and Coaching Committee.

## **G. Pool Player Rules**

1. Over the course of the Spring recreational season, teams in the 8U, 10U, 12U and 14U divisions may have games where they will be short players. Our league has established a pool player system to provide players with an opportunity to play in extra games and help fill empty roster spots. Teams may only request a pool player when the total number of players expected to attend the game is one more than the minimum number to play without forfeiting the game.
2. At the beginning of each Spring recreational season, the Player Agent will send out an email to the league requesting pool players. Interested players should email the Player Agent with the following information:
  - Player Name
  - Player Division
  - Parent Name
  - Parent Phone Number
  - Parent Email Address
3. Pool players are not obligated to take part in additional games. Players will be selected at random from those who indicate they are interested in pool play, when the need arises. Parents will be contacted with the game specifics. Parents must respond immediately to indicate if their player is available to participate in that game.
4. A pool player shall bat last in the batting order and shall not pitch, unless approved by both the Player Agent and applicable Division Coordinator. The Player Agent will notify the opposing team manager if a pool player is to be used as a pitcher. For interleague games, a pool player may be used in any position.

# SECTION 5 – NON-PLAYING RULES

## A. Responsibility

1. The League's Board, and its selected designees, shall have responsibility for enforcement of the League's rules and regulations. Any questions, comments, concerns, or other correspondence regarding the rules, regulations, and policies should be first directed to the appropriate Division Coordinator. In making any discretionary decisions, the Board's and the Division Coordinator's primary duty shall be to act in the interest of sportsmanship, fair play and team equity.

## B. Player and Member Conduct and Behavior

1. All Players and/or Members (as defined in the League's Bylaws) of the League are expected to support the League in the following manner:
  - a. Become familiar with the League Bylaws, rules and regulations, and USA SOFTBALL rules governing play;
  - b. Support League objectives, policies, rules, and regulations regardless of personal views;
  - c. Follow the League's Bylaws and rules and regulations to voice your concerns, objections or opinions; and
  - d. Maintain a positive, team-oriented relationship with the coaches and other spectators, parents and guardians.
2. The Board must approve any public actions or activities performed in the name of the League or any of its teams in advance by any of its Players or Members.
3. Players and Members are to contact their Player Agent concerning questions about League rules, regulations, policies, procedures, Player or Member misconduct, coaching concerns, or any other matter pertaining to the well-being of the League. Except as otherwise provided for herein or in the League's Bylaws, any matters that a Player or Member would like brought to the attention of the Board are to be reported to the Player Agent, who is responsible for placing the item on the Board's agenda at their next regular meeting. Any matter that a Player or Member may have regarding a Player Agent can be reported to any other member of the Executive Board.
4. Players, Members and spectators are to maintain civil conduct at all times.
5. Excessive physical disciplining, mental, physical or verbal abuse, the use of profanity, or the unsportsmanlike conduct by any Member or spectator is strictly forbidden regardless of the relationship to the Player.
6. A Player may be benched for failure to comply with League or team rules, chronic unexcused absences, unsportsmanlike conduct, and/or other action by the Player not in the best interest of the team.
7. A Player who has three unexcused absences (games and/or practices) may be reported by the Manager to the Division Coordinator and the Player Agent. Advanced planned family events, other sport activities, school or religious activities, and illnesses or injuries communicated to the Manager in advance of the absence are considered excused absences.
8. Players shall not be left unattended before or after a practice or game. If a Player continually has a problem with parent drop-offs or pick-ups, the Manager shall report the situation to the Division Coordinator and the Player Agent.
9. Players, Members, and spectators are forbidden to use any tobacco products or the consumption of or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs in the vicinity of the playing or practice fields, including parking areas.

## C. Disciplinary Action and Removal

1. Player, Member and spectator misconduct may be defined as, but is not limited to, any of the following:
  - a. Poor sportsmanship;
  - b. Inappropriate cheers or comments that demean or otherwise make fun of girls on the opposing team or your own team;
  - c. Chronic absences from team practices and/or games;
  - d. Foul and/or abusive language;
  - e. Use or influence of alcohol, tobacco products, or illegal drugs at or around any playing or practice facility, including parking areas;
  - f. Mental, verbal and/or physical abuse of a Player, parent, spectator, coach, or game official;
  - g. Multiple ejections from games involving 4S Softball teams; and
  - h. Blatant, purposeful, or multiple violations of 4S Softball or USA SOFTBALL rules.
2. Allegations of misconduct shall be made in writing as soon as reasonably possible to the appropriate Division Coordinator or to any member of the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall
  - a. act upon allegations of misconduct within seven (7) days.
  - b. not investigate anonymous complaints except in the event that alleged misconduct reported involves physical and/or sexual contact with any coach, parent, or player.
  - c. take disciplinary action which may include an oral or written reprimand, suspension, removal, or any other penalty. In addition, the Executive Board may forward a recommendation to the Board for revocation of League membership in accordance with the League Bylaws.
  - d. file a report of the action

Any decision made by the Executive Board is final and cannot be appealed.

3. Any Member or spectator who is ejected from a game involving any 4S Softball sanctioned team shall be suspended for the remainder of the game in progress and the following game. The ejected party has one minute to leave the premises, removing himself or herself from sight and sound or the game shall be forfeited at the umpire's discretion. The ejected party may have no contact with the members of the team during the pre- or post-game activities of either game for which they are suspended. It is the responsibility of the Manager, or acting Manager, or his or her designee, to make sure the ejected party leaves the premises. The Division Coordinator and Player Agent shall be notified by the Manager, and a report shall be made by the Division Coordinator to the Board.
4. A Player who is ejected from a game will serve a "bench ejection." The Player will be removed from the lineup but may remain in the dugout at the discretion of the umpire. An out shall be recorded each time the ejected Player was to appear at the plate for the remainder of the game. The Division Coordinator and Player Agent shall be notified by the Manager, and a report shall be made by the Division Coordinator to the Board.
5. Any Player, Member, or spectator who is ejected from a second game involving any 4S Softball sanctioned team, may, at the discretion of the Division Coordinator and approval by the Executive Board, be suspended from attending any games in which a 4S Softball team is participating for the rest of the season.
6. Any Player who resigns, after notification of team assignment, shall not be reinstated in any division on any team for that same season. The Recreational season, the All Star season and the Winterball season are considered separate seasons.

## **SECTION 6 – PLAYING RULES**

### **A. Responsibility**

1. The umpires have responsibility for the enforcement of the League's rules and regulations on the field of play. The umpires shall enforce all USA SOFTBALL playing rules as well as any general and special rules provided by the League. Any questions, comments, concerns, or other correspondence regarding the rules and regulations should be first directed to the appropriate Division Coordinator. Any comments or concerns regarding the umpiring shall be directed to the League's Director of Umpires. In most cases, the field umpire's decisions are final; any appeal of these decisions must be made through the Protest Committee following the rules of protest (see Subsection F below).

### **B. Game Schedule, Cancellations, and Makeups**

1. Game and practice schedules are the responsibility of the League's Scheduling Director. Managers shall notify the Division Coordinator of any request for a change in game or practice schedules. All changes shall be approved by the League's Scheduling Director prior to making the changes.
2. In the event of rain or other occurrences that may affect the condition of the playing fields, the Scheduling Director and/or the county of San Diego shall determine whether the fields are playable. Once the decision to cancel games is made, the Director of Umpires and Division Coordinators shall be notified. For County fields the county's fields manager determines whether the fields are playable.
3. If there is any question about field conditions, coaches must check the appropriate means of communication for field conditions. Coaches may NOT cancel a game, even when agreed upon by the other team's coach, unless done so in the interest of player safety and the Scheduling Director is unavailable. Any team that cancels a game or fails to appear when the game was not officially cancelled will forfeit that game.
4. Once a game has begun, the umpire shall have sole authority to suspend play if determined the field is unplayable or dangerous. The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic, or other causes which compromise the safety of the Players. If the game is regulation, the game will be considered complete. Games that are not considered regulation shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped, if continued, subject to scheduling availability.
5. Games that are called or suspended shall be rescheduled, if possible. If games cannot be rescheduled, each team will be credited with one-half game won and one-half game lost. Teams with the highest number of rescheduled games will have first priority in rescheduling games. After that, games important to the final standings will get priority.

### **C. Uniforms and Equipment**

1. During games all Players will wear uniforms as required by 4S SOFTBALL, which includes:
  - a. Shirt (provided by 4S SOFTBALL) with number on back (name optional);
  - b. Pants (no shorts, skorts, capris, overalls, waders, or other similar short-legged pants);
  - c. Shirts to be tucked in at all times;
  - d. Rubber cleats, except for 14U players who are allowed to wear metal cleats.
  - e. Socks, visors/hats, jackets, sweatshirts, and/or undershirts may also be worn.
  - f. Fielding masks must be worn by pitchers in all divisions and when playing in the infield in 6U, 8U and 10U.
2. Pitchers shall not use any glove which does not meet USA SOFTBALL standards. Pitchers wearing any

garment or device of a color that, in the umpire's opinion, would conceal the ball or otherwise confuse the batter may be required to remove such garment or device. Failure to comply will cause the pitcher to be removed from that position.

3. Players may not wear exposed jewelry during games, pre-game warm ups, or practices. Medical bracelets may be worn, taped to the body so the medical information remains visible, in accordance with USA SOFTBALL standards.
4. All bats shall comply with USA SOFTBALL standards; no baseball or wooden bats are permitted. All batting helmets must have a metal cage or clear plastic mask. All equipment must be in good working condition. Any equipment not meeting League or USA SOFTBALL standards shall be removed from the dugout.

## **D. General Rules**

1. All games played within 4S SOFTBALL shall follow the rules set forth by USA SOFTBALL and any local playing rules approved by the Board. All rules as written in the USA SOFTBALL rulebook shall apply, unless superseded by the 4S SOFTBALL rules found in the General Rules or Special Rules sections herein.
2. All games shall start at the scheduled time. The umpire shall declare a forfeit if a team does not have the minimum required number of Players within ten (10) minutes of game time (see Special Ops). Forfeits shall be annotated in the official scorebook with a score of seven (7) (or one run for each inning in regulation play for that division) to zero (0). EXCEPTION: T-Ball has no minimum Player requirement to start a game nor do forfeits apply.
3. A regulation game shall consist of a maximum number of innings or a maximum time limit specified for each division (see Special Ops), whichever occurs first. A new inning begins immediately after the final out of the previous inning.
4. No new inning shall start after time has expired. An inning in progress when time expires shall continue to completion, unless the home team is ahead and is up to bat or scheduled to bat, in which case the home team shall not bat and the game will be complete.
5. A game called by the umpire, other than due to the expiration of the time limit, shall be regulation if the number of complete innings played is the number of regulation innings minus two (2). In this case, the score reverts to that of the last complete inning.
6. A late Player may be inserted into the lineup at any point during the game and shall be inserted at the end of the lineup. Position rotation rules in the Special Ops section are not in effect for a Player who arrives after the start of a game.
7. The score of a regulation tie game shall remain a tie. No tiebreaker shall be played except in tournament play.
8. If a maximum runs per inning rule is in force (see Special Ops), no additional runs beyond the maximum shall be counted and the at bat shall be immediately terminated.
9. A Player that is injured and cannot play or must depart the game shall count as an out on her next plate appearance only, unless otherwise agreed to be both Managers, except for T-Ball and as otherwise provided for herein.
10. All Players shall bat in the lineup and thus unlimited substitution shall be allowed. No Player shall sit on the bench defensively for two consecutive innings, except for disciplinary reasons described elsewhere herein (see Special Ops for participation rules).

11. Rules regarding the participation and rotation of Players as described in the Special Ops shall be strictly adhered to regardless of the innings played in the game. A coach may protest a participation violation during or immediately after the game in accordance with Subsection F below. Umpires cannot enforce League participation rules.
12. Failure to follow any of the participation rules may result in disciplinary action that could include a single or multiple game suspension of the offending Manager, at the discretion of the Protest Committee. If challenged, the Manager must provide sufficient evidence that participation rules have been followed. Only the Manager or acting Manager may request a discussion with an umpire while an inning is in progress and shall not approach an umpire without permission.
13. The home team shall provide an "official scorekeeper," for games where the score will be counted for divisional standing purposes. The official scorekeeper shall not alert an umpire, player, coach, or spectator to an illegal player being used but shall answer an umpire's direct question regarding such matters.
14. During games, no more than four (4) certified adults will be permitted in a dugout at one time except in T-Ball.

## **E. Youth Umpire Program**

1. The Youth Umpire Program is managed by the Director of Umpires. The Youth Umpire Program utilizes 12U and older girls to umpire 8U and/or 10U games. This enables the 12U and older girls to continue to learn about softball and the rules of the game from a new perspective, as well as support the development of our younger players. Youth umpires are paid at the current rate approved by the Board.
  - a. In order to be considered as a youth umpire, candidates must meet the following requirements: Must be 12U age level or higher
  - b. Must have played 2 or more seasons of softball
  - c. Must attend a youth umpire training clinic
  - d. Must be reliable, knowledgeable and enthusiastic
2. Youth umpires are encouraged to have a large strike zone so that we encourage our younger players to swing at pitches that are close to the base. This also encourages younger players who are learning to pitch.
3. Managers, assistant coaches, parents and spectators are expected to be courteous to youth umpires at all times. It is not acceptable to question balls or strikes as called by any umpire, much less a youth umpire. If there is a question on a call in the field, the Manager may call a timeout to politely discuss the call and ask the youth umpire to consult the other umpire. The joint youth umpire decision will be final.

## **F. Special Operations ("Ops")**

1. The Special Ops set forth in this section are specific to each division of play. They are referred to in the General Rules section and supersede those found in the USA SOFTBALL Rulebook.
2. **T-Ball (6U) Division**
  - a. Number of players: Minimum of 4 to play. All players play in the field, rotating positions each inning.
  - b. Game Format: 1 Hour time limit. Goal is to play at least two innings per game. No new innings after 50 minutes. The first portion of the game time (~20mins) will be dedicated to skills practice leaving sufficient time to play two full innings. Skills practice should be simple drills with focus on the fundamentals: hitting (soft toss and tee), fielding (ground balls), and throwing.\*
  - c. Batting order: For the first half of the season, all teams will bat once through the order each inning regardless of outs. Once the season's halfway point is reached, outs will be counted to the extent

that the batter called out will return to the bench; however the number of outs will not be counted with regard to ending a half inning, and all players on a team shall bat each inning.

- d. Number of swings: 5 (this should be lenient). At the discretion of each manager, coach pitch may be used. Each girl should be given approximately 5 pitches and then move to the tee if a ball is not put into play. If a player is not comfortable with coach pitch, she may use the tee.
- e. Hit Ball - Balls in question should be called foul, although there is no limit to the distance it has to travel.
- f. Sliding is permitted in game situations only upon agreement by both coaches.
- g. No bunting, base stealing, or leadoffs.
- h. Runners advance only on a hit ball. Only one base until last batter hits, and everyone circles bases.
- i. Catchers : The catcher position is optional based on the Manager or Assistant Coach's discretion for safety of the player. For the 6U division, the league does not provide catcher's gear. If the manager/coach deems a player safe to play the catcher position, they MUST wear their batting helmet and stand back against the back stop with an assistant coach present next to them.
- j. No official scores or standings.
- k. Umpires: Managers and coaches umpire their own game.
- l. Managers must agree to any variations to these Ops prior to the play of game (ie coach pitch, letting a big hit count as a double, etc.). Non-agreement reverts back to these set rules.

\* Skills practice should be simple drills with focus on the fundamentals: hitting (soft toss and tee), fielding (ground balls and pop ups), and throwing. Note: A typical full inning with 8 players can take 15-20 minutes, so 30-40 minutes need to be set aside for the actual 2-inning game. For the purposes of this example we will assume a 5-minute arrival/setup, 20 minutes of skills practice time, 5 minutes of transition time, and a 30-minute game.

The "Skills Practice" can follow a typical higher-level pre-game warmup. Both teams can work in concert using the same station rotations or they can work independently; if working independently the Visiting team will use the Infield first with the Home team using it second. Using the above example that would be 10 minutes each team.

Example stations:

- Baserunning: running through 1<sup>st</sup> base and Home, proper running mechanics, proper running from a base
- Hitting: Tee, Soft-toss, proper stance/balance, proper hands/load/go, etc (keep it concise and simple, introduce advanced stations as needed as the season progresses)
- Grounders/Fielding: proper stance/balance, paddles, attacking the ball out front, moving to the ball then into proper throw position
- Fly Balls/Fielding: there won't be a lot of fly balls but proper feet and hands are important, tennis balls, wiffle ball popups, etc
- Throwing/Catching: Proper throwing mechanics, hit the target/net, catching wheel/glove work, move to the ball
- Mental Game: Ball/Base/Backup concepts, force outs, tag outs & how to tag

Example Equipment needed:

- Wiffle balls
- Softballs
- Tennis Balls
- Tees
- Nets (if you have them)
- Fielding paddles (or barehand w/tennis balls)
- Buckets or other target
- Cones

### 3. 8U Division

- a. Pitching: Girl pitch will be used the entire game.
  - i. For first three weeks of season (Through 1<sup>st</sup> three Saturdays): No walks allowed. Coach pitch will be used after ball 4. After the count reaches 4 balls, the offensive team will supply coach pitch, according to subsection F(3)(b) below.
  - ii. For all remaining games and playoffs: Coach pitch will only be used when the bases are loaded and the pitcher throws the 4th ball, the offensive coach will come out to pitch to the batter. A pitcher cannot walk in a run.
  - iii. A non-2<sup>nd</sup> year player must pitch at least one of the first two innings. For example if the 8U birth years are 2011-2012, then must have a pitcher that was born in 2012 or later pitch one of the first two innings.
  - iv. Managers are encouraged to provide opportunities for players to pitch at all levels who express a desire to pitch.
  - v. For a 4-inning game or longer, a team must use 3 different pitchers, where each pitcher pitches at least one full inning.
- b. Coach Pitch:
  - i. The batter will inherit her strike count. Therefore, the coach pitcher is only allowed the number of pitches as strikes the batter has remaining. The batter will be allowed unlimited foul balls.
  - ii. Coach pitch must begin with one foot on the pitching rubber.
  - iii. Coach must not lob the ball to the batter (i.e., top of arc not to substantially exceed players head).
  - iv. No intentional bunting will be allowed from coach pitch.
- c. If a batter is hit by a pitch, unless the batter is crying, hurt, or visibly distraught, encourage the batter to resume the at bat, If the batter is crying, hurt, or visibly distraught at the discretion of the umpire, the batter will advance to 1st base. If the bases are loaded, a run CAN be scored off a hit batter.
- d. 3 runs max per inning. No open innings.
- e. Game Length: Drop dead at 1:30. Games can end in a tie during league play; all games will be played to a winner in the final tournament. You will be allowed a one minute warmup between innings. Relays will not be allowed at the conclusion of the game if game time extends to 1:20 due to field scheduling limitations.
- f. Pitchers and catchers can pitch/catch a maximum of 2 innings in the first four innings. Pitchers and catchers may pitch/ catch additional innings in the 5th (or successive) inning. For the purposes of attributing innings, an inning shall be charged to any pitcher who throws a single pitch or a catcher who catches a single pitch in any inning.
- g. Runners may advance one base per play following an overthrow to a base or pitching circle. The play is live until the ball reaches the pitching circle (in the pitcher's possession) or an overthrow is made and each base runner safely advances one base. An overthrow of a "cut-off" does not qualify.
- h. No player will sit for more than one inning until all players have sat one inning.
- i. All players will play a minimum of 1 inning in the infield each game that has a minimum of three innings.
- j. Base stealing is allowed. A runner can steal one base per pitch only.
- k. No dropped 3rd strike and no stealing home.
- l. Ten players per game: Four outfielders must start on the grass or an approved marked area prior to the pitch being thrown.
- m. It is OK to start and play a game with only 7 players.
- n. Home team is responsible for the official scorebook and reporting the final score (cc visiting team).
- o. Bat around must be used in all games.
- p. If a non-injured player has to leave a game in progress, an out is recorded only the next time she is due up to bat and not beyond. If an injured player leaves the game, an out is not recorded at any of her scheduled at bats; however, the player may not re-enter the game.



- q. A tournament will be held at the end of the season. Seeding will be according to Section H(4)(a) below.

#### 4. 10U Division

- a. 4 runs max per inning.
- b. Drop dead at 1:45. You will be allowed a one minute warmup between innings.
- c. Pitching
  - i) A pitcher can pitch a maximum of 2 innings per game, unless the game exceeds four (4) innings. At least two pitchers must be used by the end of the 3rd inning (must use a combination of at least two pitchers in the first three innings). The additional pitcher(s) must get at least 3 outs within the first 3 inning period or have the 4 run rule (all attributed to the second pitcher) occur in an inning to satisfy this rule. For the purposes of attributing innings, an inning shall be charged to any pitcher who throws a single pitch in any inning.
  - ii) A non-2nd year player must pitch at least one of the first three innings. For example if the 10U birth years are 2009-2010, then must have a pitcher that was born in 2010 or later pitch one of the first two innings.
- d. All players MUST play a minimum of 1 inning in the infield each game. Adherence to this rule is to be met by the completion of the 4th inning.
- e. There must be at least three (3) Outfielders. Outfielders must be at least 20 feet behind the baseline at the start of each pitch until the ball is released from the pitcher's hand during the delivery.
- f. If both teams have 10 or more players at a game, 4 outfielders may be utilized upon agreement by both Managers.
- g. No players will sit for more than 1 inning, until all players have sat for 1 inning.
- h. Dropped 3rd strike and open home plate are in play, per standard USA Softball Rules.
- i. One stolen base per pitch, except runners can advance, at their own risk, one additional base on an overthrow and then the ball is dead. This includes steals and dropped third strikes.
- j. Bat around must be used in all games. Managers & Coaches will use a best effort approach to have players bat in different positions of the lineup from game to game.
- k. If a non-injured player has to leave a game in progress, an out is recorded only the next time she is due up to bat and not beyond. If an injured player leaves the game, an out is not recorded at any of her scheduled at bats; however, the player may not re-enter the game.
- l. You can start a game with 7 players. There is no out penalty on offense for starting a game short-handed. Players arriving late will be added to the bottom of the lineup as soon as they arrive.
- m. Home team is responsible for the official scorebook and reporting the final score (cc visiting team).
- n. An end of season tournament will be held. Seeding will be according to Section H(4)(a) below.

#### 5. 12U Division

- a. 5 runs max per inning.
- b. Drop dead at 1:45. You will be allowed a one minute warmup between innings.
- c. One pitcher cannot pitch the entire game. At least two pitchers must be used by the end of the 4th inning (must use a combination of at least two pitchers in the first four innings). The additional pitcher(s) must get at least 3 outs within the 4 inning period or have the 5 run rule (all attributed to the second pitcher) occur in an inning to satisfy this rule. Division Coordinator and Managers will determine whether this rule may be waived as the season progresses.
- d. No players will sit for more than 1 inning, until all players have sat for 1 inning.
- e. All players will play a minimum of 1 inning in the infield per game.
- f. Dropped 3rd strike and open home plate are in play, per standard USA Softball Rules.
- g. If a non-injured player has to leave the game, an out is recorded only the next time she is due up and not beyond. If an injured player leaves the game, an out is not recorded at any of her scheduled at bats; however, the player may not re-enter the game.
- h. Bat-around must be used in both inter-league and non-interleague games.
- i. Home team is responsible for the official scorebook and reporting the final score (cc visiting team).
- j. A tournament will be held at the end of the season. Seeding will be based on regular season

standings.

## **6. 14U Division**

- a. 5 runs max per inning.
- b. Drop dead at 1:45. You will be allowed a one minute warmup between innings.
- c. No players will sit for more than 1 inning, until all players have sat for 1 inning.
- d. All players will play a minimum of 1 inning in the infield per game.
- e. Dropped 3rd strike and open home plate are in play, per standard USA Softball Rules.
- f. If a player has to leave the game, an out is recorded only the next time she is due up and not beyond.
- g. Bat-around must be used in both inter-league and non-interleague games, unless the other league's rules prevent the use of Bat-around.
- h. Home team is responsible for the official scorebook and reporting the final score (cc visiting team).

## **G. Protests**

1. There are no protests of any kind permitted. All calls and decisions made by the umpire are final.

## **H. Scorekeeping, Season Standings, and Championship Tournament Rules**

1. The Website Coordinator shall post on the website each division's scores and season standings. The winning Manager is responsible for reporting scores to the Website Coordinator, respective Division Coordinator and the opposing manager within 24hrs of game conclusion.
2. Managers are not required to keep their own scorebooks. However, home teams shall provide an "official scorekeeper", who shall keep both a scorebook and scorecard. All coaches are required to be able to show proof that they have met the League's participation requirements (typically done by a spreadsheet showing each player's position by inning).
3. T-Ball (6U) Division shall keep no score or standings, nor shall it participate in any post-season play.
4. Divisions 8U, 10U and 12U shall keep scores and standings during the regular season.
  - a. 8U and 10U: The regular season final standings will determine the regular season division champion. Standings will not determine the seeding for the post-season tournament. Post-season tournament seeding will be by random draw. Random draw will be made by the Head of Divisions and witnessed by both Division Coordinators.
  - b. 12U: The regular season final standings will determine the regular season division champion. Standings at the end of the regular season shall determine the seeding for the post-season tournament. Ties will be broken first by head-to-head result, and then by fewest runs against, by total runs scored, and finally by coin flip.
5. Division 14 shall keep scores and standings to the extent possible within the structure they are playing in. Champions and tournament play will be determined by the multi-League organization governing their play. Should Division 14U play an intramural schedule within 4S Softball, they shall follow the rules and regulations herein for Division 12U.
6. All tournament play shall have a 1 hour and 30 minute time limit after which no new inning may start. No drop dead time shall be used. The maximum number of innings for pitchers and catchers in tournament play shall be determined on a per regulation game basis as listed below:  
8U:           3 inning max.  
10U:          4 inning max.

12U: 4 inning max.  
14U: No limit.

7. All other participation rules required during the regular season shall remain in force during tournament play.
8. If a tournament game is tied after regulation or the time limit has expired, the international tiebreaker rule shall be in effect. During the tiebreaker, all requirements are deemed to have been met, except that no player shall sit twice before all others have sat at least once.
9. The championship game shall be a regulation game with no time limit.
10. The home team for all tournament games shall be as follows:
  - a. 8U, 10U and 12U shall be determined by the highest seed (14U to be determined by multi-league process);
  - b. Championship games at all divisions shall be determined by a coin toss.

# SECTION 7 – B SELECT PROGRAM

## A. Introduction

1. B Select is a way for girls who are interested in playing All-Stars in the summer to start playing together, while also participating on their Spring recreational team. Teams will participate in extra practices, friendlies and a few tournaments.

## B. Eligibility

1. To be considered for B Select
  - a. Player must be registered, or if selected before Spring registration opens, provide a written intent to register, for the relevant Spring recreational season.
  - b. A player must participate within her designated age bracket, unless approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the Full Board.

## C. Divisions

1. The B Select Program offers competitive softball to girls who meet eligibility requirements and who are participating in the League's 8U, 10U, 12U or 14U Spring Recreational Season. The League does not require or make definite that teams will be fielded in all divisions, nor does it make definite the number of teams in each division.

## D. Applications and Participation

1. The B Select Program is competitive and there is no guarantee that all interested Players will participate. Players will be selected competitively in a manner described herein. Players wishing to be considered for the B Select Program must submit an application by the required deadline.
2. Players on a B Select team will be playing against teams from other leagues and communities and, thus, are representatives of the League. Participation should be considered a privilege by parents, guardians and Players, not a right, and those abusing that privilege or engaging in any behavior that in any way reflects poorly upon the League may be removed from the team in accordance with Section 5 above.
3. There are no minimum participation or rotation requirements or guarantees of playing time in the B Select Program. Coaches are encouraged to make the best use of the Players on their roster, but there is no guarantee that Players will play for a specified amount of time, or at a specified position.

## E. Fees and Associated Costs

1. A registration fee is required to participate in B-Select, which will go towards items such as umpire fees, friendly fees, and tournament fees. All such fees shall be approved by the Full Board and paid before a date established by the Full Board. Certain fees such as travel costs, which may include out-of-town travel and related costs, are not paid by the league; these costs are the responsibility of the individual Players and their parents or guardians.
2. Teams are free to solicit team members' families, friends, and associates for funds to be applied towards that team's expenses not covered by the League. However, if the team solicits and receives funds on behalf of the League or payable to the League (i.e. the check is made out to 4S Ranch Girls Softball

League), it must be very clear that these are for a B Select team and must be accounted for separately, otherwise, any funds derived from those sources shall be turned over to the League for use in the General Fund.

## **F. Coach Selections**

1. Any manager may submit an application to the Player Agent to become a B-Select Manager. Manager applications are typically due at the same time as Winterball. Manager Applications will be reviewed by the Full Board. The Full Board, by majority vote of those present, shall select the B-Select Managers.

## **G. Team Selections**

1. The Managers selected for B-Select for each division, along with the members of the Rules Committee, shall meet and create draft rosters for each team. For example, all managers for 10U along with the members of the Rules Committee shall meet and create draft rosters for all 10U teams. These teams, once approved by the managers and Rules Committee by majority vote of those present, shall be submitted to the Full Board for review, amendment if necessary, and final approval. A majority of the Full Board (regardless of quorum) must approve the teams. For example, if there are 12 directors of the Full Board (excluding unfilled positions), then 7 directors must approve the teams, regardless of the number of directors present at the vote.
2. Teams shall be comprised of ten (10) to fourteen (14) players but not more than 4 travel players. The League shall strive to give each team an equal number of players.

# SECTION 8 - ALL STAR PROGRAM

## A. Introduction

1. Players and parents or guardians interested in the All Star Program should carefully read this section to understand the requirements and expectations for participating in the All Star Program. At the request of the Board, applicants and their parents or guardians may be asked to acknowledge this understanding through a signed letter as a requirement to participate in the All Star Program.

## B. Eligibility

4. Player eligibility for the All Star Program is based upon participation in the League's Spring Recreational Season. Only a Player who has participated in 75 percent or more of her League recreational team's regular season completed games may participate in the All Star Program. The definition of participation is per the Southern California USA SOFTBALL Junior Olympic Rules and Regulations, as amended from time to time ("USA SOFTBALL Yellow Book Rules").
5. A Player must submit an application to play All Stars no later than the third Saturday in April.
6. Any Player who plays or practices with any travel team or with a recreational team in any league other than 4S SOFTBALL on or after April 1<sup>st</sup> is ineligible for the All Star Program. A high school player eligible to return to the League may be eligible to play only if she meets the USA SOFTBALL Yellow Book Rules.
7. Playing up
  - a) 8U: T-ball aged players playing up in 8U Rec Season will be eligible to play in the 8U All Star program.
  - b) 10U-14U: A player is eligible to play up in All-Stars if she is selected to play on the Gold All Star Team.
8. Refer to the USA SOFTBALL Yellow Book Rules and those sections regarding Southern California USA SOFTBALL Player Eligibility Rules for further eligibility requirements. The foregoing sections are intended to complement, and not contradict, the USA SOFTBALL Yellow Book Rules. The USA SOFTBALL Yellow Book Rules shall control in the event there is a contradiction with the League's eligibility rules.

## C. Divisions

9. The All Star Program offers competitive softball to girls who meet eligibility requirements and have participated in the League's 8U, 10U, 12U or 14U Spring Recreational Season. The League does not require or make definite that teams will be fielded in all divisions, nor does it make definite the number of teams in each division.

## D. Participation

10. The All Star Program is competitive and there is no guarantee that all interested Players will participate. Players will be selected competitively in a manner described in Subsection G., herein.
11. Players on an All Star team will be playing against teams from other leagues and communities and, thus, are representatives of the League. All players and parents must sign the 4S Softball All-Star Code of Conduct. Participation should be considered a privilege by parents, guardians and Players, not a right, and those abusing that privilege or engaging in any behavior that in any way reflects poorly upon the League may be removed from the team in accordance with Section 5 above.

12. There are no minimum participation or rotation requirements or guarantees of playing time in the All Star Program. Coaches are encouraged to make the best use of the Players on their roster, but there is no guarantee that Players will play for a specified amount of time, or at a specified position.

## **E. Fees and Associated Costs**

13. Teams are responsible for paying for such expenses as uniforms, tournament fees, travel costs (which may include out-of-town travel and related costs), and other costs not paid for by the League. These costs are the responsibility of the individual Players and their parents or guardians, and are due and payable at the direction of the League.
14. Teams are free to solicit team members' families, friends, and associates for funds to be applied towards that team's expenses not covered by the League. However, if the team solicits and receives funds on behalf of the League or payable to the League (i.e. the check is made out to 4S Ranch Girls Softball League), it must be very clear that these are for an All-Star team and must be accounted for separately, otherwise, any funds derived from those sources shall be turned over to the League for use in the General Fund.
15. The League's participation in USA SOFTBALL sanctioned tournaments shall be recommended by the Vice President to the Board for approval. Not all teams shall necessarily participate in all the same tournaments. In making this determination, the Vice President and the Board should consider individual team competitiveness, location of the tournament, condition of the facilities, costs and such other factors that they deem necessary in the circumstances.

## **F. Coach Selections**

16. Any Manager or Assistant Coach may submit an application to become an All Star Manager. The deadline for coaches' applications will be the third Saturday in April. Eligibility is limited to Managers and Assistant Coaches in good standing with the League. Should the League not receive suitable applicants, at the discretion of the Rules, Regulations and Coaching Committee, the League may solicit other coaches after the deadline.
17. The Registration Director shall forward the applications for All Star coaches to the Rules, Regulations and Coaching Committee. The Voting Members of the Board shall meet, review all applications and approve, by majority vote, the All Star coaches.
18. The All Star coaches shall not be selected before such date as set out in the USA SOFTBALL Yellow Book Rules. Consideration shall be given to the potential placement of a candidate's daughter, where applicable, on the Force ("Gold") or Storm ("Silver") All Star team.
19. Prior to the All Star season, a coaches meeting shall be held to discuss the coaches' responsibilities and expectations.

## **G. Team Selections**

20. The All Star team selection will be administered by the Rules Committee with support from the Division Coordinators.
21. The selected All-Star Managers for each division, along with the members of the Rules Committee, shall meet and create a draft rosters using the rankings (as described in G.3) as a basis as follows:
  - a) The Gold Team shall be formed first, as follows:
    - i. Top 1 Pitcher

- ii. Top 1 Catcher
  - iii. Top 5 Overall (not counting above two players)
  - iv. Remainder of the team, including without limitation additional pitchers and catchers, will be filled by Gold Manager selected with Rules Committee discussion and approval.
- b) Silver and Bronze Teams: Rules Committee and remaining Managers for that division shall develop rosters for Silver and Bronze teams as applicable.
  - c) Once teams approved by the Rules Committee by majority vote rosters shall then be submitted to the Voting Board for review and final approval. A majority of the Full Board (regardless of quorum) must approve the teams. For example, if there are 12 directors of the Full Board (excluding unfilled positions), then 7 directors must approve the teams, regardless of the number of directors present at the vote
  - d) Rules Committee and applicable Managers shall discuss possible reassignments should any one or more players decide not to play All-Stars or, after the season begins, choose to resign from her team.

## 22. Player Evaluations

- a) End of Season Rankings: Each Manager shall submit a Division-wide player rankings as directed by the Rules Committee at the end of the regular season and before playoffs, after consulting with their coaches.
- b) Assessments: The League will hold mandatory assessments, and each Manager and Division Coordinator for that Division, and the Player Agent shall rank the players.
- c) All Ranking Sheets (with names) shall be made public to the Rules Committee.
- d) The Rankings from the Regular Season and the Assessments shall be considered by the Rules Committee to determine the player's overall ranking.
- e) The rankings are only dispositive of the first five (5) players for each division's gold team, as well as the top ranked pitcher and catcher.
- f) The rankings for the remaining players are for consideration only and not dispositive of a player's placement on a team.

23. Teams shall roster up to a maximum of twelve (12) Players. If any division forms only one (1) All Star team, they shall roster up to a maximum of thirteen (13) Players. After district play has been completed, any team that advances to the State Tournament may expand their roster up to a maximum of fifteen (15) Players at the Manager's discretion, with approval of the Board. The pool of available Players for roster expansion after district play shall be those Players who have applied and are eligible for All Stars.

24. After team selections, should a team lose a Player to injury, resignation or any other reason, the team's Manager may pick another Player from the list of eligible Players. It shall be solely at the Division Coordinator's and Player Agent's discretion as to whether the lost Player's status is permanent or temporary (thus affecting the status of the replacement Player). All Player replacements shall be conducted according to USA SOFTBALL Yellow Book Rules on supplementing All Star teams.

## H. Team Names and Uniforms

25. Team names will be as follows for every division with no exceptions:

- a) Gold teams will be named "Force";
- b) Silver teams will be named "Storm";
- c) Bronze teams will be named "Lightning";

In the event that more than one gold or silver team is formed for a division, the Executive Board will assign names to the teams.

26. Team uniform design is the responsibility of the Uniforms and Trophies Coordinator, at the direction of the Board. Any deviation from the approved uniform design is not permitted.

27. Uniform numbers, names, and ordering shall be coordinated by the Uniforms and Trophies Coordinator. Numbers will be selected so that they will not conflict with Players on the other team in a division in case teams need to utilize players on different teams in different tournaments.



28. Only a Player's last name and number shall be displayed on the back of the uniform. No other names (including first names or nicknames), symbols or markings are permitted.

## **I. Contingencies**

1. All situations pertaining to the All Star Program not specifically covered in Section 8 All Star Program herein, shall revert to Sections 1 through 6 of the rules and regulations herein.

# SECTION 9 - WINTERBALL SEASON

## A. Eligibility

1. Player eligibility for the Winterball Program (also known as “Fallball”) is described in Section 2B with the following exceptions:
  - a. Winterball is open to girls with a “League Age” of 6-15.
  - b. Due to the limited number of teams, not everyone registering will be guaranteed placement with a team.

## B. Divisions

1. The Winterball Program offers instructional softball in 8U, 10U, 12U, and 14U divisions. The League does not require or make definite that teams will be fielded in all divisions, nor does it make definite the number of teams in each division.

## C. Registration

- A. Registration for the Winterball Program is described in Section 2D with the following exceptions:
  - a. General registration for Winterball will run from May through August.
  - b. The late registration deadline is the first Saturday in September. If a player would like to play after this date, the Player Agent will determine what is possible with the teams that are formed.

## D. Fees

1. Fee and refund policies are described in Section 2E with the following exception:
  - a. Any player not placed on a team by the league will receive a full refund of fees paid.

## E. Coach Selections

1. Coaching selections for Winterball shall be made by a vote of the Executive Board, from an approved list of candidates provided by the Rules Committee.
2. No mandatory training is required for Winterball.
3. Manager positions will be filled and will be notified as soon as it is feasible and practical to do so.
4. Managers from the recreational season need not fill out another application but must notify the Player Agent in writing (email is acceptable) of their desire to coach.

## F. Team Selections and Player Placement

1. Team selections and player placement is described in Sections 4 with the following exceptions:
  - a. The Executive Board will review the number of players, related skill levels, number of pitchers and catchers and any other pertinent factors to determine the number of teams in each division for Winterball.
  - b. In any draft, there will be no designation of Reserved Players or forfeiture of draft picks.
  - c. There will be no restrictions during any selection or draft based on a player’s status as a pitcher.
  - d. Players may play in an older age division provided they are selected or drafted to do so. Players

requesting to play up in an older age division may not displace a league age player. Players requesting to play up are encouraged, but not required, to attend evaluations.

- e. There will be no random selection of players not attending the player skill evaluations.
  - f. Eligible siblings are not required to be selected or drafted to the same team.
  
  - g. Assessors shall be Division Coordinators, Head of Divisions, Player Agent, Development Director
  - h. The Division Coordinators shall run the assessment for their respective division thus will not assess that division.
- G. Player Agent, President, and Head of Divisions will form teams and submit to the Full Board for approval
- ### Uniforms and Equipment

1. Uniforms and equipment for Winterball are described in Section 6C.

## H. Playing and Special Rules

1. Some or all of the 4S SOFTBALL playing rules may be superseded by the rules of the Winterball organization 4S SOFTBALL will be participating in. If there is no specific rule from that organization then 4S SOFTBALL rules will prevail.
2. Participation and rotation rules will still be used during Winterball as described in Section 6D and 6E with the following exceptions:
  - a. Each 8U player will play at least two innings of infield and two innings of outfield per doubleheader.
  - b. Each 10U and 12U player will play at least one inning of infield per doubleheader.
  - c. In the event a team participates in an end-of-season tournament, minimum participation rules shall not apply unless the tournament rules state otherwise.

## **SECTION - 10 AMENDMENTS**

1. These rules and regulations may be amended by a majority vote of the Board at any meeting of the Board in accordance with the provisions noted below:
  - a. Rules and regulations governing the Spring Recreational Season (Sections 2 through 6) in place on the day of assessments of the playing year must remain in force until the season, including tournament play, is complete, except upon 2/3 majority vote of the Board.
  - b. Rules and regulations governing the Summer All Star Season (Section 7) in place on March 1<sup>st</sup> of the playing year must remain in force until the season is complete, except upon 2/3 majority vote of the Board.
  - c. Rules and regulations governing the Winterball Season (Section 8) in place on 1<sup>st</sup> of the playing year must remain in force until the season is complete, except upon 2/3 majority vote of the Board.

## **SECTION - 11 EXCEPTIONS**

1. The Board may make exceptions to these rules and regulations on a case by case basis by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Voting Members of the Board at any meeting of the Board in accordance with the provisions noted below:
  - a. Exceptions made should be in the interest of fair play for all parties concerned.
  - b. Any exceptions made shall be reviewed during a subsequent meeting of the Rules Committee to be considered for a recommendation to the Board for a vote of an amendment to the rules and regulations as described herein.