

PORTAGE JR MISS SOFTBALL – MAJORS DIVISION

Ages 11–13 | Spring Season (Updated July 2025)

1. OFFICIAL RULES

- Official **NSA Fastpitch rules** apply
 - The exceptions listed below take priority
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2. EQUIPMENT

- League-approved **12” Optic Yellow softball** (synthetic or leather)
 - League-approved **fastpitch or T-ball bat**
 - **NOCSAE-approved batting helmet with face guard** (required)
 - **NOCSAE-approved catcher’s gear** (mask, chest protector, shin guards)
 - **Fielding masks required** for ALL defensive players (games & practices)
 - Uniform shirts must:
 - Match team color
 - Have a number
 - Be **tucked in when batting**
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3. MANAGERS & COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES

- Home and visiting teams must:
 - Clean dugouts and bleachers
 - Rake the field after games and practices
 - Failure may result in loss of practice time
 - Unsafe conditions:
 - Coaches may remove players **without penalty**
 - Must notify the umpire first
 - Coaching eligibility:
 - Anyone removed from coaching may not coach any PJM team
 - Coaches charged with violent crimes or crimes involving children are **immediately suspended** until resolved
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4. GAME FORMAT

- Regulation game:

- **6 innings OR 1 hour 30 minutes**, whichever comes first
 - Official game:
 - After **3 completed innings OR 60 minutes**
 - Mercy rule:
 - 12-run lead after 3 innings
 - 10-run lead after 4 innings
 - 8-run lead after 5 innings
 - Team size:
 - Start with **10 players** when available
 - Minimum **8 players** allowed (no automatic outs) can end with 7 players
 - Lineup rules:
 - Up to **10 players** may start
 - Maximum **4 substitutes** (see Substitution section)
 - Start time:
 - Teams have **10 minutes** to field at least 8 players before a forfeit
 - Run rule restrictions:
 - When a team leads by **10 runs**:
 - No stealing
 - No drop 3rd strike
 - Otherwise:
 - **Drop 3rd strike and stealing home are allowed**
 - **Infield fly is in effect**
 - Tied games:
 - Regular season games end in a **tie**
 - Tournament games use international tie-breaker
 - Batting minimum:
 - All players will bat **at least once per game**
 - If time expires mid-inning, teams may finish one full batting rotation
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5. PITCHING

- Legal pitching motions per **NSA/USSSA rules**
- Hit batters:
 - If a pitcher hits **3 batters in one inning**, she is removed for that inning
 - Pitcher may return in a later inning
- Catcher safety:
 - Catcher must wear **full gear** when warming up a pitcher
- Pitching limits:

- **Unlimited pitching**
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6. BATTING RULES

- All players present bat the entire game
 - Late arrivals bat **last** in the order
 - Maximum **10 runs per inning**
 - Hit by pitch:
 - Batter is awarded **1st base**
 - Helmet rule:
 - Helmets must be worn at all times outside the dugout
 - Umpires may warn players and coaches
 - Continued unsafe violations may result in **manager ejection** (last resort)
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7. BASE RUNNING

- Play stops when:
 - Defensive player has control of the ball **inside the pitching circle**
- Until then, runners may advance at their own risk
- Outs may be made at **any base**

Stealing & Leading Off

- Stealing, leading off, and sliding are allowed
 - Runners:
 - Are subject to **leaving early and hesitation** calls
 - May **not steal** when their team is up by 10 runs and no drop 3rd strike
 - May steal home
 - Sliding at home plate is **strongly encouraged** when a play is being made
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8. SUBSTITUTIONS

- Substitute players:
 - Must be from the **same or immediate lower division**
 - Require **parent approval** and board notification
- Limits:
 - Maximum **4 substitutes**
 - Up to **10 total players**
- Substitute rules:
 - Bat **last** in the order

- Play **outfield only**
- Tournament play:
 - A substitute may play for **only one team** until that team is eliminated
- Defensive substitutions:
 - Bench players must rotate into defense **every other inning after the 1st**
 - Violations may result in **manager ejection**

Courtesy Runners

- Allowed for:
 - Pitcher, catcher, or injured player
 - Courtesy runner:
 - Last out recorded
 - If pitcher or catcher: next-to-last out
 - If no outs recorded: player farthest from current batter
 - Courtesy runner is **strongly recommended** for catchers with 2 outs
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9. PLAYER REMOVAL

- Injury or illness:
 - Player is skipped in batting order **with no penalty**
 - Leaving early (not injured/ill):
 - Team receives an **automatic out** when that spot comes up
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REMINDER: This division emphasizes **player safety, competitive development, and sportsmanship**, preparing athletes for higher levels of fastpitch softball 