

# FAST-PITCH Special Operating Rules (SORs)

Softball Newfoundland Labrador will sanction all the minor Fast-Pitch Provincial Championships. Except where noted (see Competition Notes below), rules for these events will be governed by Softball Canada 2022-2023 Official Rule Book.

## 1. Tournament Registration and Fees

- a. Teams that do not follow proper registration procedures may not be permitted to participate in tournaments:
  - b. A team will be considered registered for a Softball Newfoundland Labrador sanctioned tournament only when the following conditions are met;
    - i. **Registration must meet all deadlines;**
    - ii. All affiliation and tournament fees are paid upon registration for any tournament;
    - iii. All roster information must be submitted upon registration using proper forms provided by Softball NL. Incomplete registration forms will not be accepted by Softball NL;
    - iv. Only players, coaches, and team officials that are in “good standing” with Softball Newfoundland Labrador will be permitted to register and participate.
- Players must meet age requirements for the specific division as of December 31st of the current year;
  - Teams must register a minimum of 11 players to participate. Roster size must not exceed 17 players;
  - All players participating in a Softball Newfoundland Labrador sanctioned tournament must appear on the official roster. Rosters are “official” once they are released by the Softball NL office to the tournament director. If a team is discovered to have used an ineligible player the team will face disciplinary action and possible removal from the tournament;
  - For all other tournament registration and fee payment information please visit the Softball Newfoundland and Labrador website ([www.softballnl.ca](http://www.softballnl.ca)) or email Softball NL Executive Director Dave Feener at [executivedirector@softballnl.ca](mailto:executivedirector@softballnl.ca).

## 2. Coach Certification and Dress Code

- a. **U13 and below** must have at least one coach must possess a minimum NCCP "Community Sport – Ongoing Participation". All other coaches must have completed the online Foundations of Coaching Softball, Part 1.

**U15+** must have at least one coach must possess a minimum of Weekend One of Competition Introduction Program (in-training status). All other coaches must have completed the online Foundations of Coaching Softball, Parts 1 and 2.

Contact SNL ([executivedirector@softballnl.ca](mailto:executivedirector@softballnl.ca)) to check certification or for information and/or a certification clinic;
- b. Certificate of Conduct and Vulnerable Sector Check. All ADULT coaches, managers, parent volunteers, on the playing field during a MINOR game MUST have a cleared Vulnerable Sector Check. This check must be dated within the last 36 months of the tournament;
- c. Coaches are expected to dress in proper attire for the softball field. Coaches are not permitted to wear clothing that references alcohol, tobacco, or anything deemed inappropriate by the umpire, tournament director, or Softball Newfoundland Labrador representatives;

- d. Sandals and flip flops are not permitted. Footwear must have closed toes and provide proper support.

### 3. Field Dimensions and Ball Size

| <b>MALE</b> | <b>Softball Size</b> | <b>Pitching Mound</b> | <b>Base Paths</b> |
|-------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>U11</b>  | <b>11"</b>           | <b>35'</b>            | <b>45'</b>        |
| <b>U13</b>  | <b>11"</b>           | <b>38'</b>            | <b>55'</b>        |
| <b>U15</b>  | <b>12"</b>           | <b>42'</b>            | <b>60'</b>        |
| <b>U17</b>  | <b>12"</b>           | <b>46'</b>            | <b>60'</b>        |

| <b>FEMALE</b> | <b>Softball Size</b> | <b>Pitching Mound</b> | <b>Base Paths</b> |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>U11</b>    | <b>11"</b>           | <b>35'</b>            | <b>45'</b>        |
| <b>U13</b>    | <b>11"</b>           | <b>38'</b>            | <b>55'</b>        |
| <b>U15</b>    | <b>12"</b>           | <b>40'</b>            | <b>60'</b>        |
| <b>U17</b>    | <b>12"</b>           | <b>43'</b>            | <b>60'</b>        |

### 4. Official Line Up / Fair Play Rules

| <b>Division</b> | <b>Batting Order</b> | <b>DP / Flex Players</b> | <b>Defensive Play</b>   |
|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| U11             | All players bat      | Not Permitted            | Play a minimum of <b>3 innings / 9 outs</b><br><br><b>No Player is to sit consecutive innings</b> |
| U13             | All players bat      | Not Permitted            | Play a minimum of <b>3 innings / 9 outs</b>   |
| U15             | 9 batters            | Not permitted            |   |
| U17             | 10 Players (DP/FLEX) | Permitted                | List of all available substitutes are on the bottom of the line-up card                           |

#### U11 and U13 Exceptions

- In any game that ends early due to the mercy rule. It is the responsibility of the COACH to ensure that all players play a minimum of 2.0 innings in the field.
- For DEFENSIVE PURPOSES - an inning will be the equivalent of 3 outs OR application of the 3 run rule to end an inning (see Scoring below).
- Teams must play with 6 Infielders and 3 Outfielders, playing in appropriate starting positions.
- If the player who caught in the previous ½ inning is on base with 2 outs, they MUST be replaced with the player who recorded the last (2nd) out in the inning. The team is not charged with a substitution, as the purpose is to speed up the game.
- Bunting - not permitted up to and including U13

### 5. Scoring

- U11/U13/U15 – may score a maximum of 3 runs per inning. Exception: 7th inning (“open inning”).
- U17 - may score a maximum of 5 runs per inning. Exception: 7th inning (“open inning”).
- Softball Canada mercy rules will be in effect (15/2.5, 10/3.5 and 7/4.5 complete innings).
- Maximum +/- rating in any game is +/- 7. If the home team is leading after an official game has been ended (either 6.5 innings or other i.e. weather, darkness, etc.) the game is over and will not continue for the purpose of a team attempting to gain a +7 rating.

- e. Tie Breaking Rule will be in effect after 7 complete innings. Applies to all tournament games with the exception of the championship game. The team will start their turn at bat with the player who is scheduled last in that respective half-inning being placed at second base.

## 6. Home Plate Area

- a) The runner **MUST** make every effort to avoid colliding with opposing players at home plate. A motion using the upper body to gain momentum on a slide is unsportsmanlike conduct and will result in an ejection.
- b) The catcher **MUST** leave an area open for the runner to touch home plate.
  - Ball is not in the play and catcher is obstructing home plate – Delayed Dead Ball - runner safe.
  - Catcher is about to receive the ball and obstructs home plate – Delayed Dead Ball - runner safe.
  - Catcher has possession of the ball. Moves to a position to make a play. An area needs to be open on the plate for the runner to be able to touch. Runner is liable to be put out.

## 7. Strike Zone and Pitching

The Pitcher shall:

Players in all age categories may start with one foot on the pitching plate, Pitchers of all age categories may leap in the air, land and then release the ball provided they do not establish a second “push point”, also known as a “crow hop”. What umpires are directed to look for is that the hands must be separated and the arm rotation must be started prior to the pitcher re-establishing contact with the ground.

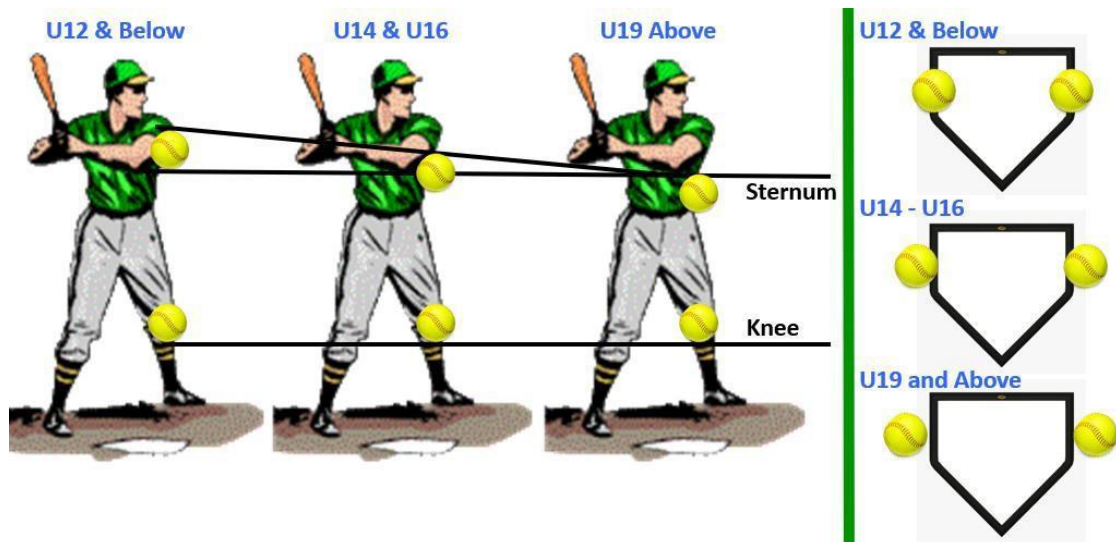
**Illegal Pitch** shall be called for any infraction of the pitching rules.

- U11/U13 - The umpire shall warn the pitcher on an illegal pitch. The next two called infractions shall not be penalized. On the fourth and continuing infractions, an illegal pitch will result in a ball on the batter and all runners advanced one base.
- U15+ - The umpire shall warn the pitcher on an illegal pitch. The next infraction will result in a ball on the batter and all runners advanced one base.

**EXCEPTION** – Runner on 3<sup>rd</sup>. When an illegal pitch is called with a runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> base. A ball shall be awarded to the batter. R1 will advance to 2<sup>nd</sup> base if it is open. No run shall be scored on an illegal pitch unless R3 is forced to vacate the base with a count four balls and bases loaded.

**NOTE:** In all levels of minor, at the umpire's discretion, if the pitcher continues to excessively use the same illegal motion, a change of pitcher will be enforced.

**Strike Zone** – umpires to adjust the zone to match the level of play.



**Pitching Rotations**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| U11 / U13<br>2 Pitchers (Max 4-Inns), a pitcher will be considered to have pitched 1 Inning if the pitcher throws 1 pitch. | U15/U17/U19/U20<br>No Rotations<br>No Limits |
|--|--|

**8. Protective Equipment – Fielding Defensive Masks and Batting Helmets**

| Age | Pitcher                    | On-Deck Batter / Batter / All Base Runners |
|-----|----------------------------|--|
| U11 | MUST wear a defensive mask | Must have a Protective Face Guard (2020)   |
|     |                            | Must have a Protective Face Guard (2020)   |
| U13 | MUST wear a defensive mask |  |
| U15 | MUST wear a defensive mask | Must have a Protective Face Guard (2020)   |
| U17 | Must wear a defensive mask | Must have a Protective Face Guard (2020)   |

**NOTES:**

SNL recommends that infielders also wear a face mask.

SNL strongly recommends the use of a fielding mask at first and third base position.

9. **Bats** - must be on the “Approved Bat List”. Enquiries sent to: [umpiredirector@softballnl.ca](mailto:umpiredirector@softballnl.ca)

- a. <http://www.wbsc.org/softball/softball-bat-list/>
- b. <https://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/play-usa-softball/certified-usa-softball-equipment>

Needs to have one of these five stamps.

**WBSC  
(New)**

**ASA 2000**

**ISF 2005**

**ASA 2004**

**USA Softball  
(New)**



10. **Infield Fly** is not in effect for U12 divisions.

## 11. Stealing / Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike

### U11/U13

|  |                         |   |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| Lead Off<br>The runner may take 3-5  | Stealing<br>No stealing | Dropped 3 <sup>rd</sup> Strike<br>Dead Ball |
| steps off the base but immediately returns to base when the catcher throws the ball back to the pitcher. |                         | Batter is Out                               |

**\*\* Runners are not permitted to steal 3<sup>rd</sup> base or home at any time.**

**U15+ Male/Female follow official playing rules of Softball Canada.**

## 12. Tie Breaking Procedures

For the purpose of determining all positions at the end of round robin play the following tie breaking procedures will apply in this order:

- Head to Head Record.
- If there is still a tie, the team with the best plus/minus (+ or – 7) in all round robin games will be given the higher placing.
- If teams are still tied, the team who had the least total number of runs scored against for all round robin games will receive the higher placing.
- If teams are still tied, the team with the highest total number of runs scored will receive the higher placing.
- If teams are still tied, plus/minus ratio (total number of runs scored for + total number of runs scored against/total number of runs for) will apply. The lower plus/minus ratio will win the tie breaker.
- If two teams are still tied a coin toss will take place to determine positioning.

## 13. Tournament Days

Tournaments will be scheduled from Friday to Sunday, with Monday being a WEATHER DAY. If weather is unfavorable throughout the weekend games will be played on Monday. If the weather is unfavorable on Monday the tournament will NOT be rescheduled and awards shall be awarded to the top two ranking teams.