



Nashua Senior Softball

*We do not stop playing because we grow old.
We grow old because we stop playing*

Revised & Effective April 2022



Nashua Senior Softball (NSS) Rules

- A. Rules of Play are Senior Softball-USA Rulebook with amendments listed below. The Board of Directors may amend these rules by majority vote.
- B. The Director of Rules is authorized to immediately implement new rules for unforeseen events. Every January the President will ask league members for suggested rules changes. Any league member may submit a rule change in writing prior to the annual Rules Committee meeting held in late February, to the Director of Rules and/or the President. At their meeting, the rules committee will prepare a list of suggested rules changes for review by the full board at the March board meeting. Amendments to League Playing Rules must have the support of a majority of the Board of Directors. After this meeting no additional rules changes will be reviewed for the upcoming season. The President will annually appoint the Director of Rules.
 - ***Exception:** Any rule may be changed or enacted at any time that involves player safety.
- C. Base paths for the NSS will continue to be 65 feet in length. SSUSA uses 70 foot base paths as of the 2014 season.
- D. Home plate shall be a "wooden plate" with dimensions of 19" wide by 34.5" long (See Figure 1 of page 9 for details)
- E. Pitching screens must be used during all batting practice prior to the scheduled games.

LEAGUE RULES

- 1. All games are to be played as per the League Schedule. If due to unavoidable circumstances, both managers wish to reschedule a game, they must have prior approval from the President or his acting representative. A regulation game will consist of seven (7) innings.
- 2. Games canceled due to weather or field conditions will be rescheduled, if possible. Only a member of the Board of Directors can cancel games. The home team manager may cancel a game for weather or field conditions if a member of the Board of Directors is not present. When a game is canceled, all succeeding games that day will also be canceled. The person canceling the games must notify the appropriate managers and umpires. Once a game has started it will be the umpire's decision to stop a game. A game must be five (5) complete innings to be considered complete unless the home team is ahead at the end of four and a half (4-1/2) innings.
- 3. A fifteen minute break will be taken between games 1 and 2 to allow players in game 2 to "warm-up". This can include batting practice that can be concluded equitably within the fifteen minute time limit (*suggest 3 swings per player*).
- 4. Teams should be ready to play 10 minutes before the scheduled time.



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LEAGUE RULES – cont.

5. Protests must be lodged directly after the disputed play to the umpire. The game will be stopped and the two playing managers and the ranking board member present will resolve the protest by majority and the game will continue. If they cannot reach a majority decision, the game will be played under protest and referred to the Director of Rules who will make the decision in consultation with the two managers and the ranking board member and based on:
 - a) Nashua Senior Softball (NSS) Rules
 - b) The Experience and Past Practices of the NSS
 - c) The Official Senior Softball-USA Rules

"No appeals of judgement calls will be allowed."

6. The Home team for the first game will provide several volunteers to groom and line the field, break out the equipment, set up awnings, and otherwise make the field ready for batting practice at least thirty (30) minutes prior to game time. If required during the season, the Home team will also provide a scorer for the second game. The Home team for the second game will provide volunteers to pick up and stow all equipment following the game. The Home team for the second game will also provide a scorer for the first game.
7. At game time a Manager will submit his batting order utilizing all team members present and able to play on offense for the entire game to the scorekeeper. Each of these players is to be used for at least four (4) innings on defense in a seven (7) inning game, unless the player requests fewer innings. However, if a team has 2 or more catchers who are unable or unwilling to play any other position, the rule is waived and reduced to 3 innings for a team with 2 catchers and to 2 innings for a team with 3 catchers. A Manager cannot request or encourage a player to play fewer innings.
8. A manager who discourages attendance, promptness or allows faking of an injury in an effort to field the "best team" will be replaced at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Managers may elect to be in the submitted batting order, bat in turn, but not play the required innings on defense. If the manager is not on the submitted batting lineup, he cannot play defense unless an injury forces him to play.
9. The defensive team consists of 11 players (four outfielders, four infielders, a roving fielder, pitcher and catcher). The four outfielders must play **beyond** a 160-foot line until the ball is hit. The manager may place the infielders (including the roving fielder) anywhere on the field **inside** the 160-foot line. **Additionally, the roving fielder may be placed anywhere in the outfield beyond the 160-foot line at the managers discretion.**
10. A team cannot start a game with less than nine players. A manager may use a defensive player to catch from the opposing team for the ninth, tenth, or eleventh player. When it is that player's turn to bat, usually the ninth, tenth, or eleventh spot, an out will be recorded. A player arriving late will take the defensive catchers place in the batting order. The manager may elect to keep the defensive player to catch if he has less than eleven players. The late arriving player will then be added to the bottom of the batting order.



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PLAYERS, SUBSTITUTES AND THE SUBSTITUTE LIST

11. Over the course of a season, injuries and personal issues result in the absence or limitation of some players. Resultantly, the overall skill level of teams can be affected. In order to avoid confusion and disputes amongst managers regarding the choice of substitute players and to further develop an equitable manner of developing a list of eligible substitute players, the following rules have been adopted.

- a) Prior to opening day, all players, whether assigned to a team or not, must be a fully paid NSS member and have signed a Liability Waiver Form.
- b) Each spring, prior to the season start, a draft will be held with all managers selecting their teams. Currently each manager will select 12 players to fill his team roster (this number may change as required by annual player registration and board approval).

3-5 days prior to the draft a **Committee*, appointed annually by the board will meet and assign each manager the rank and round number where he will be placed in the draft. Additionally, the committee will assign the sponsors, requesting to play for their sponsored team, their round of selection at the draft.

**Committee is made up of three (3) players who are non managers and non board members.*

THE "DRAFT"

Either 1 or 2 days prior to the draft or at the draft, papers with the team numbers 1- 10 will be placed in a "hat".

Each manager will select a number from the "hat" and draft in the first and all odd numbered rounds based on the selected number (1to10).

In the second and all subsequent even numbered rounds that order will be reversed (10 to1).

The president will review with the managers the player list for last minute changes (additions, scratches, injuries, unavailable days of play, etc.).

- c) Following the draft, the draft order list will serve as the "Managers Ranking List" and become the official substitute list used for obtaining players to replace missing players on a teams roster.
- d) The President may amend the Master ranking list for a team in the event of unusual or unforeseen circumstances (including but not limited to "trades" or injuries).



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PLAYERS, SUBSTITUTES AND THE SUBSTITUTE LIST - cont.

- e) A manager may replace a missing player with a substitute that was drafted in the same round or any round after the missing player.
- *Exception: A manager may replace a missing player drafted in the last round of the draft with a player drafted in the last round or second to last round of the draft.**
- **During the second half of the season, a team with a win/loss record below .500, may replace any missing player with a substitute that was drafted in the prior round of the draft, the same round, or any round after the missing player. This exception may be used only while a team is below .500. Once a team reaches .500 they may no longer use this exception.**
- f) A Manager who knows he will be short players may choose substitute players from the Master ranking list or from a secondary list of unassigned substitute players. This secondary list of unassigned players shall also be created and ranked by the President and circulated to the Managers. However, the manager cannot ask a player to substitute more than eight (8) days in advance of the game date where the substitute player is needed.
- g) A substitute player(s) may bat anywhere in the batting order at the discretion of the manager.
- h) If a regular team member arrives late, he may replace his substitute player in the field and bat in the replaced player's spot in the batting order
- i) **During the regular season a player may substitute once a week.** ~~and, only once every other week for each team during the regular season.~~ In the playoffs, a player may only substitute **once** a week and only once, during the entire playoffs, for each team.
- j) In order to avoid a forfeit in the event that a substitute player that meets the above criteria cannot be found, the manager seeking the substitute may waive this rule with the consent of the opposing manager.
Exception: If an umpire or a fan is asked to substitute during a game, due to injury or emergency, this substitution does not count toward his weekly allotment.
- k) A manager is allowed flexibility in the use of substitute players in order to keep his team competitive. If a player whom the manager considers a key to his team's competitiveness is absent, the manager may use a substitute of comparable ability even though the manager may have enough regular players available. This option may result in platooning one or more of the regular players.
- l) A player injured during the game that does not wish to continue may be replaced if there is a suitable substitute that would comply with NSS Rule 11 and there are less than 11 defensive players. That substitute would take the injured player's place in the batting order. The injured player may NOT re-enter the game once Rule 11N is invoked. No out is recorded when his position in the batting order is reached and skipped.
- m) During the playoffs, all teams must field 12 players. This number includes team members and substitutes. Failure to have 12 players in the lineup will result with an out being declared for every missing player every time through the batting order.
Exception: If both managers agree, prior to the game, to both teams playing with 11 players, this rule is waived.



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PLAYERS, SUBSTITUTES AND THE SUBSTITUTE LIST — cont.'d

- n) During the first six (6) innings there will be **no** intentional walks allowed. To eliminate the “*unintentional*”/*intentional* walk, any batter receiving four (4) balls without being thrown a strike may elect to take a walk or stay at bat until a strike is thrown. If he remains at bat and takes a strike or hits a foul ball the count will revert to 3 balls and 1 strike. If a ball is then thrown the batter must take a walk.
12. A team that has less than six (6) roster players at game time will be given a loss for team standings. If a sufficient number of Substitute Players are available, all games will be played. **This rule is effective after team rosters are completed to include a minimum of eleven players.**

RUNNING THE BASES

13. Courtesy runners may be used only for players that request one due to difficulty running due to permanent or temporary injuries. They cannot be used for competitive advantage. The player must a courtesy runner as this it is not a manager's decision.

Courtesy runners are determined or designated according to the following rule:

The teammate who batted last in the prior inning is the courtesy for the first player requesting a runner. The player who batted second to last in the prior inning is the courtesy for the second player requesting a runner. This process continues until the inning ends. During the first inning only, the teammate who batted last prior to the player requesting a runner, who is not on base, is the courtesy runner for the first player requesting a runner. This process continues until the first inning ends.

In all circumstances if the designated runner is unable to serve as a courtesy runner because he has difficulty running due a temporary or permanent injury or condition, then the next player prior to the designated courtesy runner in the batting order, who is capable of serving as a courtesy runner, shall become the designated runner.

Courtesy runners from home plate must line up nine (9) feet behind an extension of the third baseline behind the catcher. They may not leave until the ball is hit. The runner will be declared out if he leaves too soon.



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RUNNING THE BASES—cont'd

13. Example with no (0) outs: (continued)

A courtesy runner from home plate may only advance past first base on the initial play if the ball is hit over a barrier (which would be a home run), or if there is an overthrow at first base on the initial play. On the overthrow to first base, the courtesy runner advances at his own peril and may only advance to second base.

Managers should notify the other manager of players requesting the use of a courtesy runner prior to the start of the game or immediately following an injury during the game. Any player may be a courtesy runner, but can only be a courtesy runner once per inning. If the batter upon reaching base requests a runner, the courtesy runner shall be the same as when the batter originally came up to bat. If the courtesy runner is on base when it is their turn to bat, they will be declared out as a runner and will bat in their turn. Another runner cannot replace a courtesy runner unless he is injured.

14. The double base at first will be separated. The infielders portion placed in fair territory 65 feet from home plate inside the first base foul line and the runners base placed in foul territory 2 feet from first base 65 feet from home plate and used exclusively by the runner. The defensive player must tag the inner base prior to the runner reaching the outer base in order to record an out. In running to first base, if a play is being made, the runner is out if he touches the inside base or if he slides into first base. After reaching first base he may slide if he is returning to the base. On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield, the runner may touch the inner or outer base. Should the runner return to first base, he must return to the base in fair territory.
15. When running to any base or home, the runner is out if the umpire determines interference with a throw. When being forced at a base, a runner must avoid contact with the defensive player or the umpire will call an out. Players are not permitted to over-run second and third base without being in jeopardy of being tagged out. A player has the option of sliding. This option is included primarily so a player can avoid a collision. Sliding into first base or into the scoring plate is not permitted. The exception is when returning to first base. If a runner misses a base to avoid a collision, the runner will not be called out (umpire's judgment). A runner missing a base for the above reason must return to the base before advancing. Failure to do so will result in the umpire returning them to the base.

Rules 16 through 19 for running the bases are installed for player safety and will be aggressively called when witnessed by umpires. These four (4) rules do not require a player appeal.

16. A Commitment Line is drawn 20 feet from home plate (perpendicular to the third base foul line). Once a runner has reached (or crossed) that line, he must continue on to the scoring line. Returning to third base after this commitment is an out. The runner is out if a defensive player with the ball touches home plate or the extension prior to the runner reaching the scoring line. The runner cannot be tagged out after passing the Commitment Line.



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RUNNING THE BASES—cont'd

17. The Scoring **Home Plate** is an extension of the first base foul line starting 8 feet from Home Plate. The runner must have his foot touch the **scoring plate** before any fielder with the ball touches home plate or **the strike zone extension** in order to be safe at home. All outs at home plate are force-outs; there cannot be a tag out at home. The runner will be declared out if he slides or runs through the batter's box even if there is no play.
18. Runners may not intentionally cause contact with a defensive player to break up a play or to jar the ball loose. If the runner fails to veer out of the way, or slide, the runner will be declared out. Runners cannot disrupt a potential double play by physical contact or running in the path of the second throw. If this interference, in the umpire's judgment, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the runner closest to home plate shall be called out.

NOTE

A runner being hit with a thrown ball does not necessarily constitute interference.

19. A team can only score five runs in each of the first six innings with the following exceptions:
 - a) If a team is down by **21** or more runs in the fifth (5th) inning they may score enough runs to reduce the margin to **14** runs so as to not invoke the Mercy Rule.
 - b) In the sixth (6th) inning a team that is trailing by more than five runs may score enough runs to tie the score.
 - c) A team may score unlimited runs in the seventh or subsequent innings.
 - d) The scorekeeper will announce "The fifth (5th) run is on _____ base" in the innings when the five run rule applies.
20. If either the Visiting team or the home team, after batting in their half of the fifth (5th), is behind by **15** runs, the "Mercy Rule" will be invoked and the game will end.
21. The batter/runner cannot be thrown out at first base by an outfielder. The roving fielder can throw out a runner at first base **only if he is playing inside the 160-foot line**.
22. All outfielders must remain outside the 160-foot line until the ball is hit. A foul ball on the third strike is an out. If the ball is caught in playable territory in the air, the ball remains live.
23. The umpire will declare "illegal pitch" if the arc of the ball at its' highest point is below 6 feet or over 12 feet above the ground. If the batter elects to swing at an illegal pitch, the ball is in play. The ball must hit the home **plate** or the **extension** to be declared a strike.
24. If there is a tie score after seven innings, the last batter in the preceding inning is placed on second base at the start of each team's respective half inning. If the last batter is unable to run due to temporary or permanent injury, the next preceding player in the batting order that is uninjured will be placed at second base.



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RUNNING THE BASES—cont.

25. Arguing with an umpire on balls and strikes will not be tolerated.
26. Calls at home are the sole responsibility of the Home Plate Umpire. If the Home Plate Umpire does not call "OUT" and the defensive team questions the call, the plate umpire can ask the base umpire for help. If together they are inconclusive the runner is "SAFE".

SAFETY

27. Anyone pitching during a NSS game is required to wear an approved face-mask for his protection. During batting practice the board strongly recommends that anyone pitching wear a face-mask. Infielders are also encouraged to wear facial protection.

OTHER RULES

28. If a player is ejected he must leave the field immediately and will be given a warning by the Executive Board. For a second ejection, the player will be suspended for his team's next scheduled game. For a third ejection, the player will be suspended for the remainder of the season, including any post-season play. The ejected or suspended player will not be allowed on the field or in the dugout.

NOTE

An ejected player's spot in the line-up will be an automatic out for the remainder of the game.

29. Only managers may question the interpretation of NSS or SSUSA rules.
30. An umpire has the authority to penalize the team at bat for slow play by assessing the batter a strike (or a ball if the delay is caused by the defensive team).
31. Only bats bearing the approved ASA 2000, ASA 2004 or the new ASA logo (see Figure 2) (enacted in 2013 and covering all bat manufactured in the future with this label) certification mark are allowed or must in the sole opinion and discretion of the Executive Board, have been manufactured prior to 2000 and if tested, would comply with ASA bat performance standards then in effect. This bat rule shall not apply to players 75 years of age and older as of December 31 of the playing year. However, to avoid the inadvertent use of such a bat by a non-qualified younger batter, any player 75 years of age and older using a bat without the aforementioned ASA certifications must clearly mark his bat by wrapping a strip of **2 inch wide white tape around the bat just above the handle grip**. All "Miken" Ultra II" bats, even those bearing the ASA 2000 mark, will be illegal for anyone under the age of 75. If a player would prefer others not using their bat, they should place a 2 inch wide "red" tape strip around the bat just above the handle grip.
32. The softball is the "Worth AHD 12SY HOT Dot Softball 12 Yellow .52/300"



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OTHER RULES - cont.

34. A playoff will be held at the conclusion of the regular season. The nine league teams will be ranked from first to last (1 to 9) according to their order of finish. All series will be best 2 out of 3 with the highest ranked team at home in games 1 and 3. In the first round the team finishing 9th will play the team finishing 8th. The loser of this series will be eliminated. The winner of this series (team 8 or 9) will play the team finishing 1st, while the team finishing 7th will play the team finishing 2nd, the team finishing 6th will play the team finishing 3rd and the team finishing 5th will play the team finishing 4th. The losers of these series will be eliminated. The winners will advance with the winner of the 9/8 vs 1 series playing the winner of the 5 vs 4 and the winner of the 6 vs 3 series playing the winner of the 7 vs 2 series. The losers of these two series will be eliminated. The winners will advance to the finals and play a best 2 out of 3 series to determine the league Champion.

APPEALS/METHOD OF APPEALS

35. During a game, the Umpire may not instruct the Defensive Team in the proper method of appealing a play.
36. The Defensive Team is allowed only one attempted appeal per runner, whether the appeal is taken while the ball is live or dead.
37. **APPEALING WHILE THE BALL IS LIVE** (before Umpire calls "Time"). During a live ball appeal, any fielder must announce to the Umpire which runner and base he is appealing. The fielder need not touch the runner or the base which he is appealing. Ball is still live and all runners may advance with liability of being put out.
38. **APPEALING AFTER BALL IS DEAD** (after Umpire has called "Time" and then resumes play by signaling "Play Ball"). During a dead ball appeal, any fielder must announce to the Umpire which runner and base he is appealing. The fielder need not touch the runner or the base which he is appealing. The ball is now live only for the purpose of making an appeal.
- a) No runner may advance on an appeal play after time has been called.
 - b) No runner is out if he steps off a base and is tagged during an appeal.

UNIFORMS

39. In order to display the league as a structured organization, and to show respect for the team sponsors, players are expected to wear the issued uniforms during regular season and playoffs. Certain exceptions may apply if approved by the Board of Directors. Failure to comply will result in an initial warning. Continuous disregard for the rule will result in a suspension as determined by the Board of Directors.



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Figure 1. Home Plate and Strike Zone Mat Dimensions

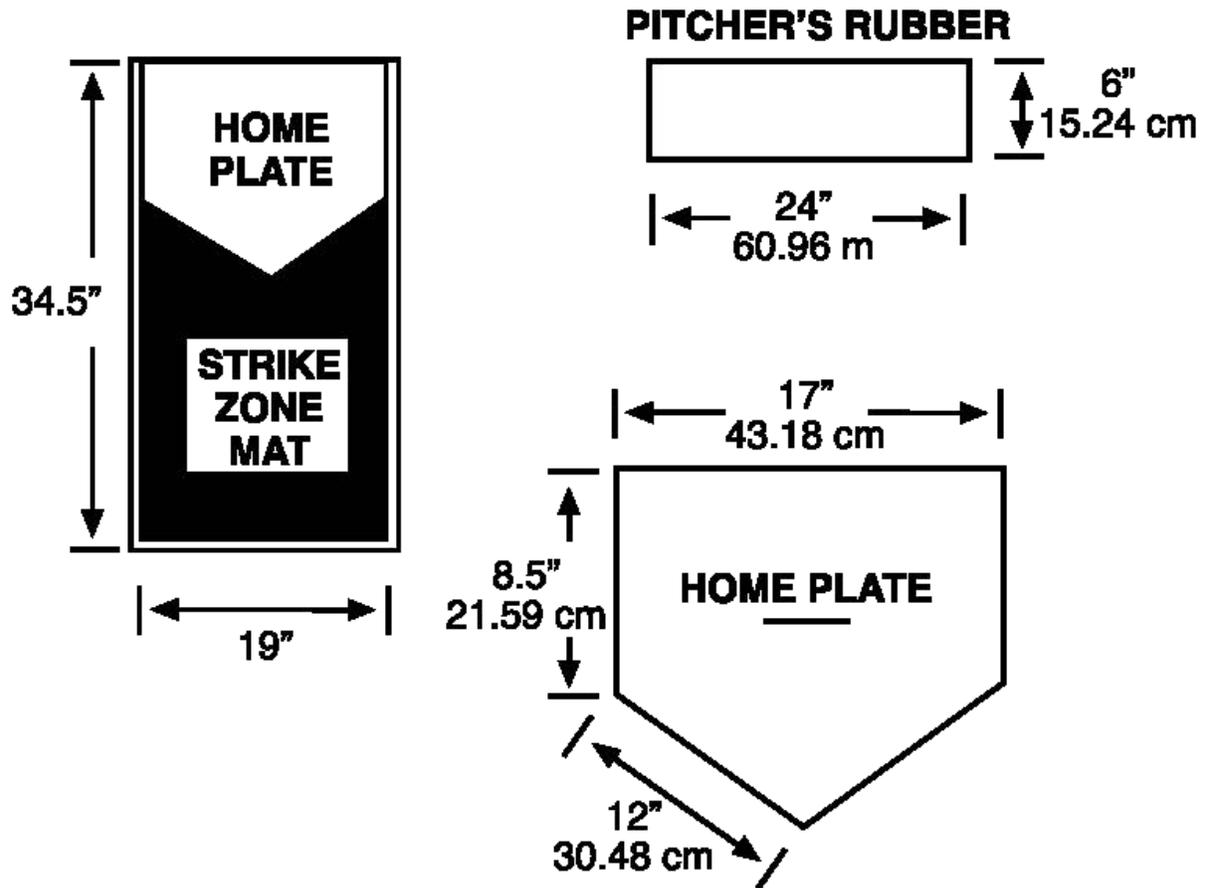


Figure 2. ASA Certification Labels Old and New



Old ASA Labels



New ASA Label



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At the ASA Council Meeting in November 2012, the ASA Council voted to change the ball used in Slow Pitch Championship Play for some divisions of play. The rule change is as follows:

Rule 3 Section 3E [3]: EFFECTIVE 2014: **The 52/300 12 inch ball will be the only 12" ball allowed in Men's Adult Slow Pitch, Men's Co-ed, Men's Master's Slow Pitch and Junior Olympic Boys Slow Pitch, with the exception of Seniors.**

Comments: Removes the 44/375 12" ball as an approved ball for all Men's Adult Slow Pitch, Men's Co-ed, Men's Master's Slow Pitch and Junior Olympic Boys Slow Pitch Championship Play beginning January 1, 2014.

Any questions or comments regarding this matter should be directed to Craig Cress at 2801 N.E. 50th Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73111 email ccress@softball.org, phone (405) 425-3441, fax (405) 424-3855.