BROOKLYN PARK ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION / COON RAPIDS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION / CHAMPLIN-DAYTON ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION / MAPLE GROVE PARKS AND RECREATION GIRLS SOFTBALL LEAGUE

RULES AND POLICIES FOR 2016

Changes from BPAA 2015 are highlighted.

The purpose of the Brooklyn Park Athletic Association (BPAA) is to benefit the physical, mental, moral, and character development of its members and of the youth in our community by providing major sport programs and activities for boys and girls, regardless of ability or financial status. (Article 1, BPAA By-Laws)

Remember to coach safety, fundamentals, and sportsmanship.

In all divisions, games will be played in accordance with the official 2015 USSSA Rules for Slow Pitch Softball, except as stated in this document.

- See the 7U/8U Rules Supplement for additional rules for that division regarding coach pitching, coaches in the field, umpires, player rotation, etc.
- These rules pertain to 7U through 14U games organized by BPAA on behalf of both BPAA, Coon Rapids Athletic Association (CRAA), Champlin-Dayton Athletic Association (CDAA), and Maple Grove Parks and Recreation (MGPR). BPAA teams playing in games organized by other organizations, including 16U teams playing in the CRAA league, will follow the rules of those organizations.

Team Rosters:
BPAA—Commissioners will give the Softball Committee a team roster for each team in each division, before the season starts. At player’s option, player may register at sign-ups to play up to a higher division. Players opting to play up to a higher division must declare this intent prior to team rosters being formed. **No player shall participate before being registered and waivers are signed.**

CDAA, CRAA, MGPR—Consult with your organization for roster requirements/policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Base Distance</th>
<th>Pitching Distance</th>
<th>Infield Fly Rule</th>
<th>Ball Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7U &amp; 8U</td>
<td>55’</td>
<td>35’</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>11”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10U</td>
<td>60’</td>
<td>40’</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>11”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12U</td>
<td>65’</td>
<td>46’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14U &amp; older</td>
<td>65’</td>
<td>50’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* **Bases should be placed on dirt portion of field.** If the size of the infield dirt does not allow bases to be placed on the dirt at their regular distance, adjust base length such that all bases are on dirt.
Weather Conditions: No games or practices will be held when the National Weather Service has issued Severe Weather Warnings or when lightning is within 10 miles. If any game is interrupted by severe weather, the game will be suspended by the umpire (if one is present) or by agreement of the head coaches if there is no umpire. Unless conditions warrant otherwise, all parties should wait at the field for up to 15 minutes to determine if the game can be resumed. After 15 minutes, if game cannot be resumed (as determined by umpire or head coaches), players and coaches may leave. Umpire may leave if there are no other games scheduled or field conditions become unplayable for further games.

Make-up Games: We will ATTEMPT to reschedule games not played due to rain outs, wet grounds, etc., if possible. Games may only be re-scheduled by the League Scheduler. Work with your Division Commissioner to coordinate rescheduling.

Score Books are provided and must be used by both teams.

Scheduled home team will always be assigned the third base dugout, except in the case of a doubleheader. A team playing a second straight game on the same field will remain in the same dugout for the second game, regardless of whether they are home or away, and their opponent will use the vacant dugout. Note that for this rule, the “home team” is always determined from the league schedule—the actual field in use is not a factor. For example, in a game between a BPAA team and a CRAA team, if the schedule states that the CRAA team is home, they will occupy the third base dugout and be in the field first, even if the game is at a field located in Brooklyn Park. In tournaments, home team (in terms of batting order) is determined by a pre-game coin toss, but the higher-seeded team will use the 3rd base dugout, unless one team is playing a second straight game on the same field.

The team bench is to be used only by players and coaches. If all coaches for a team will be in on-field coaching positions, the coaches should designate one or more parents to be present in the bench area to assist them. No one else (siblings, friends, pets, non-designated parents, etc.) is allowed in the team bench area.

The on-deck batter is to use only the on-deck circle located behind the current batter (third base side for a right-handed batter, first base side for a left-handed batter), regardless of which dugout her team occupies. Only one player is allowed to be taking warm-up swings at a time. The first batter of any half-inning should not begin taking warm-up swings until the opposing team is completely in the field, and the batter’s own team is completely in the dugout.

Coaches: All coaches (including all base coaches) must be at least 16 years of age. The base coach’s box is three feet back from the baseline. A coach may not touch a baserunner at any time during play, if this infraction occurs the base runner is out. Exception is made if the baserunner runs down or falls over the coach standing three feet back from the baseline, or if the coach is congratulating a batter/runner after an out-of-the-park homerun.
Umpires: Umpire decisions are final. Umpires are in charge of the game. At least five minutes before the scheduled start of the game, the umpire(s) shall call the coaches together for a conference to discuss ground rules and answer any questions.

8U and older games will normally be officiated by an umpire supplied by the League. However, if one is not available, each team will furnish one umpire and they will rotate position between home plate and the infield each half inning. The umpire from the defensive team will umpire behind home plate during each at bat. Head coaches or base coaches may not umpire. The home plate umpire is the head umpire that half inning. A game may be played with one umpire if agreed to by the coaches.

- See the 7U/8U Rules Supplement for rules regarding 7U umpires.

Bats: All bats must be Official Softball.

- 10U and above only: The performance standard for all bats will be a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.20 or less.

Thrown Bat: The head umpire will issue a warning to both team benches on the first occasion of a thrown bat. Any batter throwing their bat after the warning has been issued is out, the ball is dead, and the base runners may not advance. This rule shall be enforced at all levels.

Bunting: It is illegal to bunt or chop at the ball. The batter is out.

A runner shall be awarded the next base the runner is going to if blocked by a fielder who is not in possession of the ball.

Balls and Strikes:

- In 12U and older, three balls shall constitute a walk.
- In 10U, four balls constitute a walk.
- In 10U and older, two strikes shall constitute a strike out, except that each batter with one strike shall be allowed one courtesy foul ball. After that, the batter is out if an additional foul ball is hit or another strike is called.
- See the 7U/8U Rules Supplement for their rules regarding batting limits.

Hit Batter: Batter hit by the pitched ball is not awarded first base.

Base Running: In all divisions, when a play is made on a base runner at a base, the base runner must either slide or clearly get out of the way. If base runner fails to do so, they will be called out. Double first bases are used (place the white base in fair territory with the colored base in foul territory). The first baseman will use the base in the playing field, and the runner will use the base in the foul area when there is a play at 1st base.

If base runner interferes with an attempted double play, the base runner immediately succeeding will also be called out.

Courtesy Runners: Courtesy runners are allowed for base runners who are unable to continue as a baserunner for medical or injury reasons. Umpires may disallow courtesy
runners if they believe they are not for valid medical or injury reasons. The courtesy runner will be the player to most recently have been called out.

**Positioning of Fielders:** In the 7U through 10U divisions, the first, second, shortstop, and third base players cannot be more than five feet in front of the base line when the ball is pitched. In all divisions, if runners are on base, the baseman and shortstop should not stand in the baseline unless said player is fielding or is in possession of the ball. All four outfielders must be positioned on the outfield grass at the start of each play. (Exceptions to this rule may be agreed upon by the coaches and umpires before the game when playing on fields with non-standard infield skins.)

**Starting Time:** All games will start promptly as specified on the league schedule, or will be forfeited by the team not on the field ready to play. A team with an insufficient number of players to start a game will be allowed a ten-minute grace period from the scheduled start time to field a team.

**Minimum Player Quantity—8U and older:** A team may play with as few as six rostered players present. If a team has five or fewer rostered players present, the game will be declared a forfeit.

If a team has at least six, but fewer than ten, players present, the game will be played under the following rules. The game will not be considered a forfeit, and the final score will count in league standings and/or tournament results:

**Nine players:**
- Team will play with the players they have present.

**Six to eight players:**
- When at bat, the shorthanded team will bat only the players from their own roster.
- When on defense, the shorthanded team may borrow from either or both of the following sources, to increase their quantity of defensive players to nine:
  - Players from the opposing team. If this is done, the borrowed players will be from the bottom of the opposing team’s batting order that inning. This option is always available to the coach of a shorthanded team; the opposing coach cannot refuse to allow her/his players to be borrowed.
  - Players from another BPAA/CRAA/CDAA/MGPR team, of the same age division or younger. For liability reasons, borrowed players must be registered slowpitch softball players in one of those organizations—NO EXCEPTIONS.
- If the shorthanded team has:
  - eight players, the borrowed player will play right field.
  - seven players, the borrowed players will play right field and center field.
  - six players, the borrowed players will play the three outfield positions.
- If players are borrowed from the opposing team, and that team has enough players reach base that a borrowed player will soon be due at bat, time will be called to substitute another player into the defensive position.

See the 7U/8U Rules Supplement for 7U minimum player quantity requirements.
Length of Games: A regulation game is seven innings. A total of four innings, or 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead, shall constitute a game. For games tied after seven innings, extra innings may only be played within the time constraints listed below. Tie games during the regular season shall be recorded as a tie.

The following time limits will be observed. No new inning can start after the time limit. All innings started must be completed. For games played on a field with a scoreboard clock, the remaining time on the clock will be considered official unless extenuating circumstances exist (weather delays, injuries, etc.). If the prior full inning is completed (final out recorded) before the clock reaches zero, another inning may be played. Umpires may declare an additional inning will be played if they determine that a team was intentionally stalling or playing slowly to impact the amount of playing time remaining. Regular season games ended due to darkness are considered complete, regardless of game status.

- 7U, 8U—65 minutes until the mid-season tournament; 75 minutes after the mid-season tournament.
- 10U, 12U—75 minutes
- 14U—60 minutes

League tournaments or Opening Day may have different time limits—See the rules of each tournament for details.

Established Limits of Ball in Play: Umpires and opposing coaches shall discuss boundary lines for the particular field before the game starts. The playing field is within two imaginary lines starting at the backstop’s wings, then running parallel with the first and third base foul lines. If the backstop does not have wings, the line is three feet in front of the players’ bench. The ball is live and in play within these boundaries. Only players, coaches, and umpires are allowed within the field of play.

Uniform/Equipment: In all divisions, uniform shirts must be worn during games. Teams may provide their own uniforms, as long as each team member has one, and that they are in good taste. Shirts must be appropriately worn throughout the game (shirts must not be rolled up exposing midriff). Failure to appropriately wear uniform could result in ejection from the game.

The catcher must wear a face mask and chest protector during games and practices. The pitcher (including 7U and 8U players in the “pitcher” defensive position) must wear a face mask during games and practices. The league will provide one each of these pieces of equipment to each team, or players may provide their own.

The use of mouth guards are highly recommended at all age levels, but not required.

All players in all divisions must provide their own batting helmet, which must be worn by all batters and base runners. Note: CRAA/CDAA/MGPR players may use either their own helmet, or the helmets provided by their league. Neither chin straps nor face masks are required for batters.
**Game Ball:** For regular season games, the home team will provide the umpire a new or good condition game ball prior to the start of each game. A playable backup ball will be furnished by the visiting team.

**Pitcher Warm-up:** Warm-up is limited to 5 pitches for a new pitcher, and 3 pitches between innings.

**Pitching Arc:** The ball must be delivered at moderate speed, underhand (from below the hip) *with a perceptible arc at least as high as the batter’s head, but not to exceed 10 feet*, before the ball reaches home plate. A flat pitch, a pitch without sufficient arc, is a Ball, even if it is within the strike zone. Should a batter swing at a flat pitch and miss or foul, it is a strike. If the batter swings and hits the ball, the ball is alive and in play. A pitch hitting home plate is a ball, unless swung at.

- See the 7U/8U Rules Supplement for their rules regarding pitching arc.

The *pitcher’s foot* must be in contact with the pitcher’s plate or mark when the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand.

- See the 7U/8U Rules Supplement for their rules regarding the pitcher’s plate.

**Runs per Inning Rule:** In 7U through 12U there is a maximum *six* run limit per team, per inning. When a team’s sixth runner crosses home plate, their turn at bat ends, *regardless of the number of outs*. In 14U, there is a maximum *ten* run limit per team, per inning.

**Game Run Rule—12U and 14U—“20 after 4, 12 after 5”:** A game will immediately end if a team is ahead by 20 or more runs after four complete innings (three and a half innings, if the home team leads), or by 12 or more runs after five complete innings (four and a half innings, if the home team leads). This rule applies regardless of the amount of time remaining.

- **“Flip-Flop”:** If the home team is trailing by “20 after 3, or 12 after 4” (i.e., one inning less than the Game Run Rule), and there is sufficient time remaining for another inning, the “Flip-Flop” rule may be followed, *if requested by the home team*. If used, the batting order for the remainder of the game will be swapped, with the trailing home team immediately up to bat again, and the visiting team batting in the bottom half of each inning. If the home team fails to score enough runs to get within “20 after 4, 12 after 5”, the game is over. If they do score enough to get within “20 after 4, 12 after 5”, the game continues, with the two teams remaining switched for the rest of the game. The head coach of the trailing team has the option of vetoing the use of “Flip-Flop”.

- There is no Game Run Rule in 7U through 10U.

**Time Called:** In all divisions except 7U and 8U, “time” shall be called by the umpire when the fielding team has control of the ball within the baselines and runners have ceased to try to advance. The ball shall be considered dead, and base runners may not advance after “time” is called.

- See the 7U/8U Rules Supplement for their rules on time being called.
All Divisions will Bat Their Entire Team Roster: In all divisions, teams shall bat their entire team roster in a continuous batting order. The batting order may not be changed during the game. A copy of the batting order with the names and numbers of each player shall be given to the opposing coach before the start of the game. Late players shall be added at the end of the batting order.

Minimum Playing Time:
- In 14U, no player shall sit out consecutive innings.
- In 7U, 8U, 10U, and 12U, all players shall play an equal amount of time in the field. 
  Example: No player shall sit out their 2nd inning until all players on their team have sat one inning, and so on, to the end of the game.

In all divisions, any player(s) who will not be allowed to participate (benched) for disciplinary reasons shall be called to the attention of the opposing coach when the batting orders are exchanged. A coach may not bench a player for quality of play. However, acts of unsportsmanlike conduct, profanity, or other detrimental conduct are grounds for some disciplinary action. Keep in mind BPAA’s “play for fun” philosophy.

Game Protests: Protests must be submitted in writing and signed within 24 hours after the game. Submit protest to your Division Commissioner with $25.00. If protest is upheld, the deposit will be refunded; if declined, the deposit will be donated to BPAA. No protest may be filed on Umpire (League or Parent) judgement calls.

Coaches, Players and Fan Conduct: The head coach is responsible for controlling themselves, their team, and their fans. Failure to do so may result in the game being forfeited.

Coaches, players or fans are not to direct any verbal abuse, profanity or other form of ridicule at an umpire, coach, or player. A coach or player doing so will be warned, and if it is repeated, the umpire may elect to declare the game a forfeit in favor of the non-offending team, or eject the offending coach/player from the game and/or park.

If an umpire is harassed unduly by the fans of one or both teams, he/she may call “time” and ask the coach(es) to speak to their fans about confining their vocal efforts to cheering for their own team. If harassment continues, the umpire may declare the game a forfeit in favor of the non-offending team or “no contest” if both teams are at fault, in which case each team will receive a loss on their record.

A coach showing unsportsmanlike conduct may be given one warning from a Softball Committee member. If a problem arises again, the Softball Committee, as a whole, has the right to expel that coach for the remainder of the current season, and, if deemed appropriate, for an unlimited period of time. Unsportsmanlike conduct is defined as harassment of anyone rightfully present at a game or other activity.

Recruitment of players by coaches is not allowed in 7U, 8U, 10U, and 12U, and could result in disciplinary action of by the Softball Committee. Recruitment shall be defined as contacting current BPAA Slow Pitch Softball players or their parents with the intent to
influence the player’s decision to request to play for that coach’s team in order to improve that team’s performance. Contact is defined but not limited to face to face contact, telephone conversation or written communication. The BPAA Softball Committee will review any allegations of recruitment brought before the committee. If the BPAA Softball Committee rules that a coach has violated this policy, disciplinary action will result as follows: First Offense - up to a one year suspension from coaching in BPAA Softball; Additional Offense – up to a lifetime suspension from coaching in BPAA Softball.

**NO SMOKING – NO ALCHOL:** There is no smoking or alcohol allowed at any BPAA/CRAA/CDA/MGPR softball event. This includes playing fields, dugouts, spectator seating, parking lots, and all other related areas. This is both a rule of the athletic associations involved, and an ordinance of the cities whose parks we play in. If any problems arise, call the police using 911.