

Softball competitions conducted by SSV will be played as a Summer Sport under the Rules laid down in the Official Rule Book of the Australian Softball Federation (Fast Pitch Game), with the exception of the modifications set out below.

# **1. SPECIFICATIONS FOR GROUNDS AND EQUIPMENT**

- a. Marking of Ground:
  - i. The baselines shall be 50 feet (15.24 metres)
  - ii. Pitch: 30 feet measured from the front of the pitcher's plate to the back corner of the home plate.
- b. Equipment:
  - i. Ball: The 11" (Ausport Primary Softball) Synthetic leather softball (with **SOFT** polycorecentre) to be used in SSV Softball Competitions.
  - ii. Shoes: Shoes with metal cleats or spikes cannot be worn.
  - iii. **A mask (with helmet) or helmet mask, Throat protector, Leg guard and Chest guard MUST be worn by catcher.**
  - iv. Bats must have a safety grip.
  - v. The wearing of a Protector by male Catchers is strongly recommended.
- c. A safety base on first base is compulsory in all SSV Softball competitions.
- d. The wearing of appropriate protection gear by umpires is strongly recommended.

# **2. REGULATIONS FOR MATCHES**

**7 Run Rule:** Applies to ALL Senior, Intermediate and Junior games.  
A team continues to bat until 3 outs, or they have scored 7 runs (7 runs must be scored in one innings).

# **3. PITCHER AND CATCHER**

The pitcher and catcher must not work as a battery for more than 2 innings, i.e. Pitcher 1 can pitch to Catcher 1 for 2 innings then Pitcher 1 can become Catcher 2, but Catcher 1 cannot become Pitcher 2. This is to develop Pitcher/Catchers and to get others involved.

# **4. COACHING**

- a. Each team, when batting, may place one player, who shall be a student at the school, near third base, and one player, who shall be a student at the school, near first base to coach their side. They must not be nearer than 3 metres from the diamond or touch the runners as they go by. These coaches must have no communication with any other coach and no other coaching by any person is permitted during the actual play 'Time' must not be called by any Coaches during the game. Between innings, coaches may seek interpretations or Clarification of rules from the Umpire.
- b. As the pitcher steps onto the plate, all talking and undue noise must cease until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- c. No intimidatory remarks are to be made at any stage of the game.  
Penalty for 3(b) and 3(c) - A 'ball' is called on the pitcher if the fielding team is at fault. A 'strike' is called on the batter if the batting team is at fault.

# **5. ORDER-OFF RULE**

- a. An umpire may order a player to leave the field. The offending player cannot resume in that match.
- b. The offending player may be replaced.
- c. An umpire may order a player to leave the field for
  - i. fighting or unduly rough play;
  - ii. persistent or deliberate breaking of the rules
  - iii. disputing the umpire's decision, and
  - iv. objectionable language, remarks or behaviour.

In the event of a player being ordered off the field, the umpire shall submit a written report to the appropriate Committee (District, Zone or Management Committee). After consideration of the report, the designated Committee will be expected to take up the matter with the Principal of the school concerned.

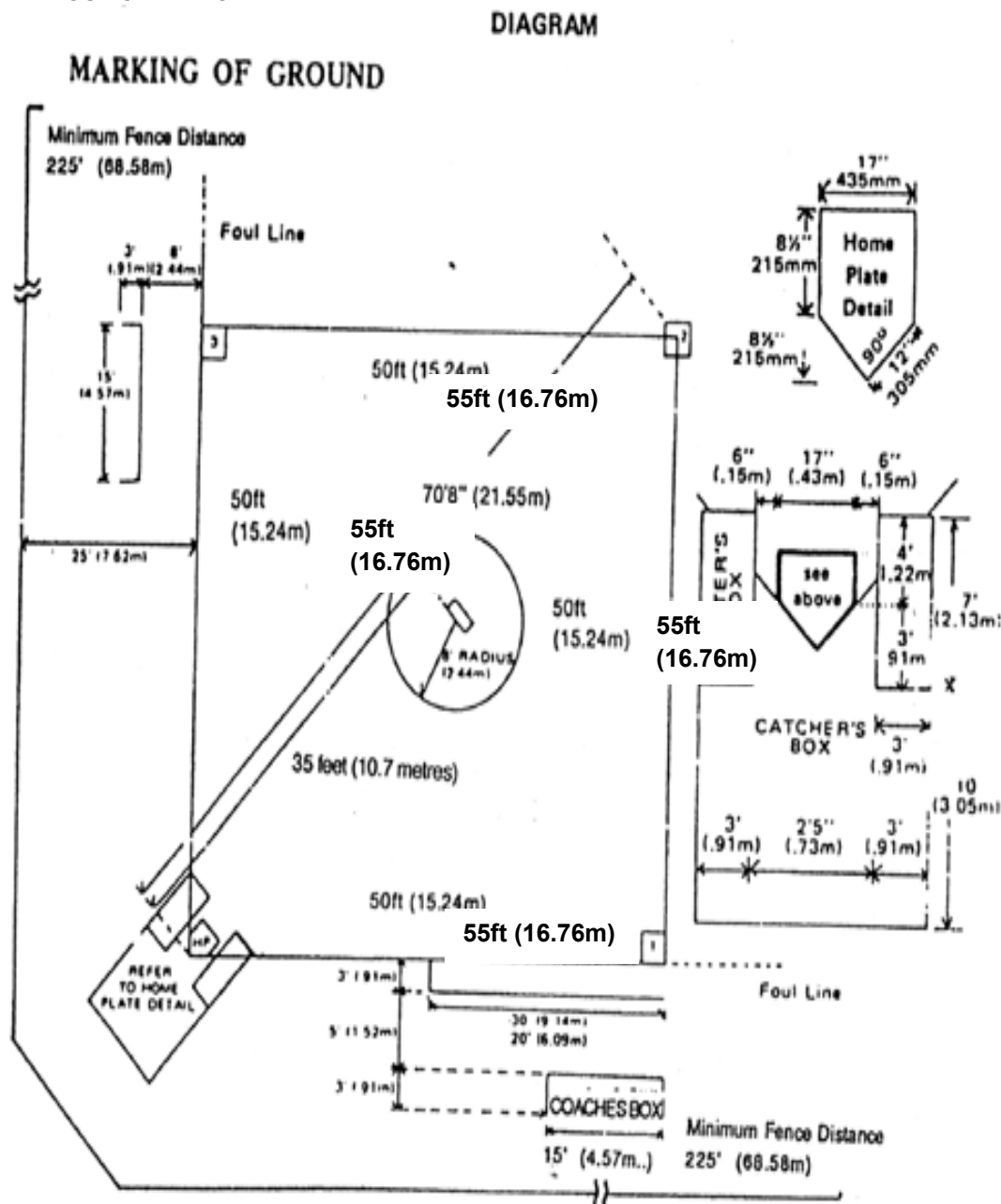
6. **NOTE:** Rule changes in the current Australian Softball Federation Handbook will apply to SSV competition, but the 'designated hitter' and 're-entry' rules are still not applicable.

# **7. FULLY LOADED RULE CHANGES**

- i. Each innings will start with the "BASES LOADED" for maximum participation and reduced waiting time for the batting team.
- ii. NO Tagging a baserunner.
- iii. NO Sliding.
- iv. The runner does not have to tag up on a fly ball, instead they can run as soon as the ball is hit without having to return to the base if the ball is caught, meaning there is NO "Infield fly rule."
- v. There is **NO dropped 3rd strike** 1.6 The pitching is SLOWPITCH and uses a STRIKE ZONE MAT to determine balls and strikes.
- vi. There are **NO walks**, instead the penalty for not throwing strikes is **on ball three**, the batter gets to hit the **ball off a batting tee**.
- vii. Each batter bats once per innings.
- viii. Rotating lead-off batter each innings.

- ix. Last three batters from the previous innings start on base each innings.
- x. Every player gets three turns at bat and one chance to run the bases every game where 9 players are used.

## 8. LAYOUT OF DIAMOND



- 9. **Until the ball is hit:**
  - a. The pitcher must be on the pitching plate.
  - b. The catcher must be behind home plate, in the catcher's box.
  - c. No fielder other than the catcher may be in foul territory or within 35 feet (10.7 metres) of home plate ('Pitching distance').
  - d. All other fielders must be outside the diamond.
- 10. **The batter is out if the bat is thrown dangerously.** The ball is dead and runners may not advance. ('Dangerously': Hits or almost hits the catcher or any other player, official or spectator).
- 11. **HOW TO GO OUT**
  - a. Caught in foul or fair territory.
  - b. Tagged in between bases. (The ball must be held securely in the hand/glove which contacts the runner).
  - c. Three (3) strikes.
  - d. Forced out.
    - i. A runner is forced to run after hitting the ball.

- ii. The runner must advance to the next base because the batter/runner/runners from proceeding base/s oblige him/her. (A fielder by holding the ball securely and standing on the base that the runner is forced to will put the runner out). Other players may then eventuate.
- e. By running before a fly ball (i.e. Any ball that is caught) and not returning to base before the ball is returned to that base.
- f. Leaving the base before the ball has left the pitcher's hand.
- g. A base-runner who misses a base/s is out if this is a result of an APPEAL PLAY!!

**APPEAL PLAY**

- i. is where any fielder stands on the base/s that was missed and appeals to umpire. The umpire will allow the appeal only if he/she has seen the infringement; **or**
- ii. bats out of order.
- h. Team scorer fails to notify umpire re 9<sup>th</sup> Batter.
- i. If the bat is thrown dangerously.

12. **FAIR BALL****A FAIR BALL IS A LEGALLY BATTED BALL WHICH:**

- a. Settles, or is touched, on fair ground between Home and First Base or between Home and Third Base.
- b. Bounds past First or Third Base on or over fair ground.
- c. Touches First, Second or Third Base.
- d. While on or over fair ground touches the person or Clothing of an umpire or player.
- e. First falls on fair ground beyond First or Third Base. A fair fly must be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, regardless of whether the fielder is on fair or foul ground at the time he/she touches the ball.
- f. The Batter hits beyond the line of the 15 feet (4.5 metres) arc.

13. **FOUL BALL****A FOUL BALL IS A LEGALLY BATTED BALL WHICH:**

- a. Settles on foul ground between Home and First Base or between Home and Third Base.
- b. Bounds past First or Third Base on or over foul ground.
- c. First touches on foul ground beyond First or Third Base'
- d. While on or over foul ground touches the person or clothing of an umpire, or player, or is blocked.
- e. Settles, or is touched, within the 15 feet (4.5 metre) arc.
- f. Touches a fielder in the 15 feet arc and the ball drops to the ground - any bunt shall be Called a foul ball, regardless of where the ball lands or is fielded.

14. **BASE RUNNING****A runner must wait until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand before leaving the base.**

NOTE: A baserunner who leaves a base as a result of the batter:

- i. swinging and missing the ball, or
  - ii. hitting the tee but not the ball shall be called not out but must return immediately to the base.
- Also, the baserunner may over-run First and Home Plate only. Anytime a baserunner is off the base he/she can be tagged, regardless of whether he/she is forced or not.
- b. 'Time' shall be called when, in the opinion of the umpire, all possible play has ceased, i.e. when an infielder ahead of the lead runner has control of the ball OR the ball has been returned to the catcher.
  - c. When the ball is over thrown and becomes 'dead': i.e. Goes into the bench or beyond the limits of the playing field (25' line) or hits a person not engaged in the game, etc., the Umpire Calls 'Time' and all runners (including batter) advance to the next base plus one from the moment at which the ball became dead; i.e.. crosses the line.
  - d. If, after the ninth batter has hit a fair ball, the ball, in the opinion of the umpire is deliberately overthrown and becomes dead, all runners shall be awarded Home. The Coach of the fielding team shall be warned that a repetition of the warning will warrant forfeiture of the game.
  - e. Any baserunner can return to their original base if they are not forced.
  - f. There is no ½ (half) way rule in Tee-Ball.
15. **THIRD STRIKE RULE: (This rule does not apply if playing Fully Loaded Rules – See Fully Loaded Rule changes P.8 Rule 7.v)** If the batter strikes out and the catcher drops the third strike and the bases are NOT loaded, the batter may attempt to run to 1st base before the ball is thrown there (other runners must advance).  
**If the bases are loaded** when the batter strikes out, the batter is out - regardless of whether the catcher drops the ball or not.

16. **UMPIRES** At the line-up the umpire should: i. Indicate the limits of the playing field. ii. Clarify any special, local or ground rules which apply.

17. **MODIFICATIONS**

- **3 Ball Count and Use of Batting Tee:** If the ball count gets to 3 balls, rather than walking the batter you must bring in the batting tee and the batter can hit off the tee.
- No fielder is allowed to remain in the outfield for more than 2 to 3 innings.
- Adding an extra player in the outfield.
- Bring in the batting tee for those students who cannot hit a legal pitch. (This could be used after strike 2).

18. **MERCY RULE/TERMINATION SCORE:** The Mercy rule will be invoked when a team is **7 runs** ahead. When one team leads by **7 runs** the following strategies will apply:

- a. Change the pitcher
- b. No stealing

If the score difference exceeds **10 runs**, the game is terminated, and teams are mixed up to provide a more even competition for the duration of the match. The Home team must provide bibs for this situation.