



2024

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**OFFICIAL SOFTBALL RULES OF THE NATIONAL
WHEELCHAIR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION**

JUNIOR DIVISION

Junior Division Rules
National Wheelchair Softball Association
(NWSA)

The NWSA Junior Division wheelchair softball rules and regulations are derived from the NWSA DI and DII rules and the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) rules. The following rules and regulations for the Junior Division are used at the Varsity and Junior Varsity (JV) levels of play. The Junior Division is played according to the rules of the ASA except wherein modifications, deletions and additions have been made, as follows:

Eligibility-Section 1

1. Athletes must be 21 years old and under **and** enrolled in a recognized high school program. If an athlete is over the age of 18 years old they will need to have their high school program complete a Verification of Enrollment Form. A high school program is defined as any program that individual is attending to receive their high school diploma. Transitional schools are eligible high school programs if the athlete has not yet received and are attempting to achieve their high school diploma.
2. The Junior Division will not adhere to a point system for disability classification to play. Athletes in the Junior Division must have a primary physical disability, which includes (but not limited to): a significant neurological involvement (muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy), traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, spina bifida, amputee, or shunt problems that affect mobility/coordination/ strength/endurance as determined by the NWSA Junior Commissioner. However, exemptions to this rule may be applied under the discretion of the NWSA Junior Commissioner (i.e. able body athletes to fill a roster).
3. Athletes in the Junior Division are allowed to play on a Division I and/or Division II team during the regular season. For the NWSA National Championships an athlete in the Junior Division can participate in the DI, DII, and/or Junior tournament under the discretion of the NWSA Junior Commissioner.
4. Athletes in the Junior Division are allowed to play on a Junior Division Varsity and JV teams during the regular season. However, for the NWSA Junior National Championships an athlete must choose to play only on a Varsity or a Junior Varsity team. However, exemptions to this rule may be applied under the discretion of the NWSA Junior Commissioner.

Field Dimensions-Section 2

1. The playing field must be a level and smooth surface of blacktop or similar materials. No objects or surfaces should inhibit the ball or wheelchairs from bouncing/rolling.
2. The left and right field fence corners must be a minimum of 110 feet and a maximum of 120 feet from home plate.
3. The straight center field fence must be a minimum of 135 feet and a maximum of 150 feet from home plate.
4. The outfield will have a 90 foot outfield retainer line. The outfield players may not cross this line until the batter hits the ball.
5. The pitching mound area includes the pitching stripe, which extends perpendicularly one foot on either side of the diagonal from home plate to second base. The pitching stripe is located 28 ½ feet from home plate.
6. All bases will be a four foot diameter circle/semicircle and 50 feet apart. The bases should be painted white.

Equipment-Section 3

1. All players must use manual wheelchairs with foot platforms. All metal parts of a wheelchair that are above the foot platform must be covered to prevent injuries in a collision. This will be inspected by the head umpire prior to each game.
2. All players are allowed to have assisted devices to alter their bat to improve their grip. The altered bat must be approved by the home plate umpire for safety concerns (no sharp or pointed edges, etc.).
3. Athletes that have trouble with catching a ball may wear a glove on either or both hands regardless of position (including pitcher).
4. All batters, fielders, and catchers are allowed to wear a helmet but are not required.
5. If player chooses to use a tee they must notify umpire before start of game (see Section 4, Article 3) and must use the tee for the entire game. When using a tee the front casters of a player's wheelchair are allowed to cross into the batters box in order to reach the tee.
6. All team members should wear uniforms of the same color and style. Uniforms are allowed to be altered to ensure safety for athletes. Each player must have a number on the back of their uniform.

Game Play-Section 4

1. Game length is determined as one hour and fifteen minutes or six innings, whichever occurs first. No new inning can be started within ten minutes remaining in the game (one hour and five minutes).
2. A minimum of eight players is needed to start a game: three outfielders, four infielders and a catcher. A maximum of ten players is allowed on the field at a time.
3. Each team must submit an official lineup to the home plate umpire at the start of each game. The lineup must state each player's name, number and whether the player hits from the tee or not. Any athletes not listed on the official lineup at the start of the game are not allowed to be added to the lineup and/or enter the game once the game has started.
4. Players and coaches will pitch from the pitching stripe, located at 28 ½ feet from home plate (see Section 2, Article 5).
 - 4a. At the Varsity level of play, athletes will pitch to opposing athletes.
 - 4b. At the JV level of play, coaches will pitch to their own athletes. A JV athlete playing in the pitchers position must have at least one wheel (casters, side-wheels, fifth/sixth wheels, etc.) within the exterior outline of the pitchers mound area.
5. When pitching there must be a minimum arc of six feet or a noticeable amount of arc. If a pitch is does not have a minimum arc of six feet or a noticeable amount of arc, the pitch can be called an illegal pitch by the umpire. On the first occurrence, the umpire will issue a warning to the coach/team. On the second occurrence, the umpire will issue an automatic strike for the illegal pitch.
6. While at bat all wheels (casters, side-wheels, fifth/sixth wheels, etc.) on a player's wheelchair must be within the exterior outline of the batter's box.
7. A thrown bat may result in an immediate out; umpire's discretion. Umpire has the ability to give a warning to a team if he/she chooses.
8. Base on balls or intentional walks are not allowed at the Junior Division.
9. At the Varsity level of play, strikes will be called (swinging or looking). At the JV level, strikes will be called only on swinging strikes.
10. Each player receives one courtesy foul ball. If the ball is hit into foul territory after the one courtesy foul ball is awarded it is now a strike. If a batter using a tee hits only the tee, a foul ball will be called.

11. If a hit ball hits the coach pitching the result of the play is a dead ball and the ball is repitched.
12. The defensive baseman and the base runner must touch the four foot diameter base (see Section 2, Article 6) with one or more wheels in order to tag the base.
13. If the runner is within the path to the next base and runs into a fielder, while in a rundown or trying to advance, they are awarded the base they were trying to achieve. If they run into a fielder outside the path to the next base they are called out. The path to the next base is under the umpire's discretion.
14. For JV level of play there will be a five run limit for the first three innings. No run limit will be administered after the first three innings.
15. If a team is ahead by 15 runs after three innings or 10 runs after five innings, the game will be called.
16. If the score is tied at the end of regulation (time/innings) extra innings will be played until a team leads in runs after a full inning.

Sportsmanship-Section 5

1. If a coach or player is ejected from a game by the umpires the coach or player will be removed for the duration of the current game and will be suspended for one additional game.
2. Players or coaches can and will be ejected upon performing the following actions: fighting, abuse language, inappropriate gestures, intent to cause harm, cheating and other behavior that the umpire seems unfit for play.

Umpires-Section 6

1. Two umpires are required for each game and at least one umpire will be an ASA certified official. With consent, the NWSA Junior Commissioner has the rights to waive this rule.
2. Umpires must have ability to communicate effectively to players and coaches to ensure that the umpire's game calls are interpreted correctly.

General questions or concerns to a game time situation will refer back to the ASA rules and/or NWSA DI and DII rules.

Junior Division rules are subject to change by the NWSA Junior Commissioner after each year.

NATIONAL WHEELCHAIR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

JUNIOR DIVISION

VERIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT FORM - HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

I hereby certify that: (To be completed by the student)

Team Name: _____

Athlete Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

School records show the athlete listed above birth date as: ____/____/____

and is enrolled in _____ high school program

for the 20__ - 20__ school year.

Printed Name _____

Title _____

Signed _____

Date _____

School _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

Affix School Seal

