

WJAA Middle School Softball Tournament Rules Clarifications

BALL

- Hard leather-covered ball (as opposed to a rubber ball)

WARM-UP TIME

- Immediately after a game ends the next teams must be ready to play.
- Each team will get 5 minutes infield practice – visiting first, then home team.
- While one team is taking infield, the other team may warm up deep in the outfield.
- The 5-minute infield practice time should not be used for batting practice – not enough time and too dangerous.

PITCHING MOTION

- Pitcher may not step forward onto the pitcher's rubber to start the pitching motion.
- The pitcher must start with at least 1 foot on the pitcher's rubber and then maintain contact with the rubber with at least 1 foot until the ball leaves the hand.
- See pertinent excerpts from the ISF rule book below.

FOUL TIP, FOUL BALL

- For a foul ball caught by the catcher to be considered an out, the ball must rise clearly higher than the catcher's head.
- Foul tips or foul balls that do not go above the catcher's head, whether caught or not, are strikes.
- See pertinent excerpts from the ISF rule book below.

“FAIR BALL” CALL

- Umpires will NOT call out “fair ball” as it may confuse runners (who mishear it as “foul ball”). Umpires will use hand gestures to indicate fair balls. Umps will call out only “foul ball.”

GAME CONTINUATION AFTER MERCY RULE

- Round robin only: Games will continue for 6 innings after the mercy rule only in round robin play.
- In the Saturday afternoon 3rd-4th place and championship games, play will be stopped immediately if the mercy rule goes into effect.

RUN DIFFERENTIAL TIE-BREAKER AND LAST AT-BAT

- At no time will the home team, if ahead going into the bottom of the final inning, be allowed to bat. For example, if the home team is ahead after the top of the 6th inning in a round robin game, the game will be declared over, even if the home team is behind in a potential run differential tie-breaker.

ISF rulebook excerpts about pitching motion

Sec. 80. PIVOT FOOT.

The pivot foot is that foot which, when placed in contact with the pitcher's plate by the pitcher, **must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the pitched ball is released.**

RULE 6. PITCHING REGULATIONS (Slow Pitch Only).

Before commencing the delivery (pitch), the pitcher

b. Must take a position with both feet firmly on the ground and **with one or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate.**

c. Must come to a full and complete stop with the ball held in one or both hands in front of the body. This position must be held for not less than 1 second and not more than 10 seconds before starting the delivery.

Sec. 3. LEGAL DELIVERY.

e. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the pitched ball leaves the hand. If a step is taken, it can be forward, backward, or to the side, provided the pivot foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate and the step is simultaneous with the release of the ball.

h. The ball must be delivered with a perceptible arc of at least 1.83m (6 feet) and not more than 3.65m (12 feet) from the ground.

ISF rulebook excerpts about foul balls

Sec. 37. FOUL BALL.

A foul ball is a legally batted ball which:

f. Goes directly from the bat, **not higher than the batter's head**, to any part of the catcher's body or equipment and is caught by **another** fielder.

Sec. 39 FOUL TIP.

A foul tip is a batted ball which

a. Goes directly from the bat to the catcher's hands.

b. **Goes not higher than the batter's head**, and

c. Is legally caught by the catcher.

NOTE: It is not a foul tip unless caught; and **any foul tip that is caught is a strike.**

ASA rules concerning foul balls seem to differ from ISF rules...

<http://www.msccr.org/~msccrorg/images/PDFs/2013%20Major%20Rule%20Changes.pdf>

Rule 1 – Definitions – Foul Ball/Foul Tip – (Emphasis) The reference to the “height of the batter’s head” as it relates to a Foul Ball and Foul Tip no longer applies. This ASA rule allows more opportunity for the catcher to obtain “outs” by catching foul batted balls the same as the first and third base person.

Umpires need to judge only whether the ball moves from the bat “sharply” and “directly” (foul tip) versus a ball that has a perceptible arc and/or if the catcher moves her glove to catch the ball after contact with the bat (foul ball – an out, if caught).