



Softball Manual

Rules, Regulations & Training Information

All SOKY Softball Games and Tournaments should be run according to Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Rules. Modifications to those rules can be found in this manual.

Revised July 2014

Special Olympics
Kentucky



**To obtain a copy of the
Amateur Softball Association (ASA)
Rules Book, you may call your local
Parks and Recreation Department.**

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SPECIAL OLYMPICS KENTUCKY SOFTBALL SPORT DEVELOPMENT TEAM

SOKY would like to recognize the following individuals for serving on the Softball Sport Development Team (SDT). Team members will be screening teams during Regional play, assisting at the State Tournament, evaluating the Softball program and assisting in the future development of SOKY Softball.

Please feel free to call any member of the SDT if you have any questions or comments.

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SPECIAL OLYMPICS KENTUCKY DIVISION CRITERIA FOR SOFTBALL

* This information should be used as a guide to coaches when determining at what level your team should compete

B DIVISION

Players do **NOT** have an understanding of rules or team play.

LIMITED basic skills: hitting, running, fielding and throwing.

GUIDELINES:

- Hitting - Majority of players struggle to make contact, ball is rarely hit beyond the infield
- Running - Relies on verbal cues
- Fielding - Waits until the ball stops rolling
- Throwing - Needs verbal cues as to where to make the play

1A DIVISION

Limited concept of rules and team play.

USEABLE basic skills: hitting, running, fielding and throwing.

GUIDELINES:

- Hitting - More consistency with making contact with the ball and will see more balls hit out of the infield
*1A players should **NOT** have the ability to **consistently** hit the ball hard enough to injure an infielder.
- Running - Initiates baserunning with less verbal cues
- Fielding - Begin to see the athlete make a play going to the ball
- Throwing - Relies on limited verbal cues

2A DIVISION

Good, basic understanding of rules and the team concept.

CONSISTENT basic skills: hitting, running, fielding and throwing.

GUIDELINES:

- Hitting - Consistently makes good contact with the ball and understands the strike zone
- Running - Can initiate baserunning without verbal cues and uses the sliding skill to avoid an out
- Fielding - Instinctively approaches a hit ball
- Throwing - Understands where to make the play without verbal Cues

3A DIVISION

Good understanding of rules and team concept.

Can consistently perform basic skills: hitting, running, fielding & throwing.

Some players exhibit advanced skills, but total team depth is lacking in regards to performing advanced skills.

4A DIVISION

Understands and uses all aspects of the game.

Performs advanced skills: hitting, running, fielding and throwing.

Good team depth in performing softball skills.

SOFTBALL

The official Special Olympics Sports Rules shall govern all Special Olympics Softball competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon Federation Internationale de Softball (FIS) and the National Governing Body (NGB) rules for slow pitch softball. In Kentucky, NGB rules - Amateur Softball Association (ASA) - will be employed for all competitions except when there is a conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules or when SOKY Adaptive Rules are employed.

OFFICIAL EVENTS

1. Slow Pitch Team Competition

The SOKY Softball Season runs June through September. The State Tournament is held each year in early September. Teams **MUST** qualify for the State Tournament by placing 1st or 2nd in a Sanctioned Regional Tournament. These tournaments are held in August.

There are founding principles that guide the Special Olympics Global Movement. One principle is aimed to providing every athlete with an opportunity to participate in training and competition events that challenge the athlete to his/her fullest potential regardless of the athlete's ability.

WHEN CREATING SOFTBALL TEAMS, COACHES ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO PLACE ATHLETES ON TEAMS WHERE EACH PLAYER WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE TEAM AND WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY IN EVERY GAME.

Section A - GENERAL RULES

- 1) In cases not specifically covered by these rules, Amateur Softball Association (ASA) rules shall govern.
- 2) The Games Rules Committee shall make all final decisions.
- 3) The Games Rules Committee reserves the right to eliminate a team, coach or player from competition for unsportsmanlike conduct. (Please refer to the Coaches Code of Conduct)
- 4) Blood Rule: A player who is bleeding or who has blood on his/her uniform shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment is administered. If medical care or treatment is administered in a reasonable length of time, the individual will not have to leave the game. The length of time that is considered reasonable is left to the umpire's judgement. If an athlete has to leave the game, the umpire shall apply the rules of the game regarding substitution and re-entry.

Section B - DIVISIONS

- 1) Competitors in softball will compete in the following divisions.
 - a. Junior: ages 15 and under
 - b. Open Age Group: reserved for combining age groups minimum number of competitors or teams in a division.
- * Combining Age Groups: In situations where there are not enough competitors to hold competition in a certain age group, the athletes should be moved into the next oldest age group.

Example: If there are not enough athletes within the Junior Age Group to hold an event, the athletes within the Junior Age Group shall be moved to the Open Age Group.
- 1) Within these age groups there will be **five** divisions (They will be the same for both male and female):
 - 4A - Regulation Rules - (Highest Ability Level)
 - 3A - Regulation Rules
 - 2A - Adaptive Rules
 - 1A - Adaptive Rules
 - B - Adaptive Rules - (Lowest Ability Level)

- 3) Divisions for male and female teams will be established according to ability.
- 4) All co-ed teams will compete in male divisions.

Section C - THE FIELD

1) The softball diamond shall have 65 feet baselines (19.81m) for male divisions and 60 feet baselines (18.29m) for female divisions. The pitching distance will be 50 feet (14.02m) for both males and females. The pitching distance can be reduced to 40 feet (12.19m) for division 2A if necessary. In the 1A and B Division, the designated pitcher may stand where he/she feels they can best deliver a pitch to the current batter, but no closer than **20ft.** from home plate.

2) In the B and 1A divisions, the playing field will be shortened to 200 feet.

*A ball that is hit over the fence ON THE FLY will be declared an out. If a ball goes over the fence on a bounce or rolls under the fence, it will be ruled a ground rule double.

3) A **16 ft.** diameter circle around the pitcher's rubber will be added to the infield for the B and 1A divisions. This circle will serve as a boundary for the defensive pitcher. This player must remain in the circle until the batter has made contact with the ball.

Section D – EQUIPMENT/UNIFORMS

1) Equipment as specified by the Amateur Softball Association shall be used.

2) The first baseman's trapping type glove may be worn by any player on the field.

3) The catcher **MUST** either wear a batter's helmet or a catcher's helmet with a face mask, as well as a chest protector.

4) All batters and base runners must wear a batter's helmet **WITH** a chin strap.

5) Twelve-inch (12") YELLOW softballs shall be used for all divisions except the B division. The B division shall use the eleven-inch (11") YELLOW softball, (women's ball).

6) All players on a team should wear the same style and color shirts with numbers on the back for identification purposes. Numbers are not required on the front of the uniforms.

7) Steel spikes are not allowed.

8) Aluminum and/or wooden bats are used and must have "Official Softball" printed on them and they must have taped or rubber covered handles at least 6 inches and no more than 15 inches long. These bats must also not have any dents, dings or signs of excessive wear.

9) Players will **NOT** be allowed to play in blue jean shorts or pants. Nor will they be allowed to wear hard soled shoes (unless for orthopedic purposes).

10) The only acceptable headgear that can be worn by coaches, coach-pitchers, and athletes are hats and/or visors, headbands and protective face masks. All hats and visors must be the same color and must be a color of the team uniform. No advertisements or logos allowed, except the logo of your team. All hats and visors must be worn the correct way, facing the front. Headbands can be worn, but do-rags or bandanas are prohibited.

NOTE: Teams **MUST** wear matching uniforms. T-shirts or jerseys **MUST** be of the same color with numbers on the back of the shirts. Members of the team may wear shorts, softball pants or sweats. All players do NOT have to wear the same kind of pant, but **MUST** be of the same color.

11) Noisemakers of any kind are **NOT** permitted by teams or spectators in the stands. Although they can be used to support a team, they have proven to be very distracting to many of the SOKY athletes on the playing field.

12) Artificial hair coloring and face painting is prohibited during all competitions. Athletes and coaches will not be allowed to participate. The ONLY exception to face paint is "eye black" that is commonly used by softball/baseball players for sun issues.

Section E - TEAM AND ROSTERS

1) For Regional Qualifiers and the State Tournament, teams may start a game with 9 players, "short-hand" rule in effect. These nine players should be in the following positions to start a game: (must have at least 10 players, maximum of 15 players listed on your roster).

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. pitcher | defensive position is on rubber |
| b. catcher | defensive position is behind plate |
| c. first baseman | normal defensive position |
| d. second baseman | normal defensive position |
| e. third baseman | normal defensive position |
| f. shortstop | normal defensive position |

- g. three outfielders must play a minimum of 3 meters behind infielders.
- h. extra player (EP) This position **MUST** be on your line-up card prior to the game, it can **not** be added during the game.

* If a team starts the game with at least ten (10) players, the additional defensive position will be a fourth outfielder.

- 2) **In B Division ONLY**, every eligible player will bat and should be listed on the line-up card in batting order. Additions of late arriving players may occur if all batters have not batted.
- 3) A team may utilize the optional extra player (EP) in its line-up. If a team begins the game with 11, the EP, then they may finish the game with 10. As always, you must report these changes to the Official Scorebook keeper.
- 4) If a team begins a game with only 9 players, the vacant position must be listed last on the line-up card. An out will be taken in the vacant position each time the "missing player" comes up to bat.

If a substitute arrives once the game has begun with a "short-handed" line-up, that player must be placed in the game immediately. If he/she refuses to enter, he/she becomes an ineligible player for the remainder of the game.

At no time may a team play with only 8 players (meaning 2 fewer than normal). This is true even if a player becomes incapacitated and cannot continue. The team will have to forfeit.

Section F – The Game

- 1) At the SOKY State Tournament, a 10 minute grace period will be allowed for the initial game of each day of the tournament. The first pitch will be tossed at 10 minutes after the scheduled game time. (An official line-up card **MUST** be turned in and teams **MUST** be on the field ready to play). Failure to meet the 10 minute grace period will result in forfeiture of the game by offending team.

At both Region and State Tournaments, teams are expected to be at the field **30** minutes prior to their scheduled game time.

- 2) A coin toss prior to the start of the game will determine the choice of home team. The team winning the toss may elect to bat first or take the field first.
- 3) A regulation game shall consist of 7 innings for Divisions 4A and 3A and 5 innings for Divisions 2A, 1A and B. In cases of inclement weather and a

game in progress is called, the following will be in force; In 3A and 4A divisions, 5 full innings will be considered a complete game. In the B, 1A and 2A divisions, 3 full innings will be considered a complete game.

- 4) **Both the 1A and B divisions will use a Coach-Pitcher*** for each game. The Coach-Pitcher will pitch only to players on his/her team. This person will pitch only. A Special Olympics athlete should be in the defensive pitcher position within the 16-ft. diameter circle.
- a) The Coach-Pitcher will **NOT** be allowed to coach base runners.
 - b) From the pitcher's position on the field, he/she will **NOT** be allowed to instruct the batter where to stand in the batter's box.
 - c) The Coach-Pitcher will **NOT** be allowed visits to home plate to place batters.
 - d) The arch and speed of the pitch are at the Coach-Pitcher's discretion; however they must obey the distance rules.
 - e) Once the ball is hit or there is a play in progress, the Coach-Pitcher may **NOT** have any more verbal contact with the player.
 - f) **Each team will be allowed to register up to 6 coaches on their Official Roster.** The Coach-Pitcher must come from this pool of coaches and only coaches registered with that team will be allowed to pitch during Tournament games. Any of those coaches may pitch in a game.
 - g) **Coach-Pitchers MUST wear the exact uniform shirt or jersey as athletes.** The Coach-Pitcher is a part of the team on the field; therefore, must look like the rest of the team. A Coach-Pitcher is **NOT** allowed to wear a coaches shirt like the other coaches if it does not match the team uniforms.
 - h) Coach-Pitchers may NOT wear blue jean shorts or pants (denim). They can sport athletic or khaki shorts or pants, but no denim of any kind.
 - i) Flip-flops and sandals are NOT permitted. Only tennis shoes and cleats are to be worn by Coach-Pitchers, Coaches, and/or athletes.

Absolutely no coaching is allowed, either verbally or physically, by the Coach-Pitcher. The umpire will issue a warning for the first violation. Subsequent violations may result in removal of the pitcher.

NOTE: The Coach-Pitcher position was added to assist the lower level teams become more successful at the offensive end of the game. The philosophy is that the Coach- Pitcher is someone who will work with the players offensively at practices and therefore will know the particulars for each batter. The Coach-

Pitcher should be a coach familiar with the team and the players familiar with his/her pitching.

- **The COACH-PITCHER is required to be a member of the Official Roster of the team that he/she is pitching for. The individual must be at least 16 years of age and an approved Special Olympics Volunteer.**
 - **CLARIFICATION of the Coach-Pitcher Rule: (B & 1A Divisions)**
 - If a hit ball hits, touches or is caught by the coach-pitcher, **the play is ruled dead. This means that:**
 - a. The batter will return to the plate to continue the at-bat. The pitch count will remain the same as it was before the pitch that hit the coach-pitcher.
 - b. All base runners will return to the last base occupied.
- 5) **Short-Hand Rule:** A game may begin or end with 1 less player than the required number. This does not apply if a player is ejected. In the case of an ejection leaving less players than the game started with, a forfeit occurs.
 - 6) Each team should give the Official scorekeeper their "line-up" at least 10 minutes before the scheduled starting time.
 - 7) The time limit for complete games states that "no new inning will begin after a complete hour of play". This means that the inning that is in progress at the hour mark, will be completed and a new inning will **NOT** be started. **THIS INCLUDES CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES.**
 - 8) **MERCY RULE-** In 3A & 4A Division a mercy rule will occur when a team is ahead by 20 runs in the third inning, 15 runs in the fourth inning, and 10 runs in the fifth inning. For the 2A, 1A, & B Divisions, a ten run lead after the 3rd inning will result in a mercy rule.
 - 9) In the B, 1A & 2A divisions, teams will play 10 batters or 3 outs (whichever comes first) per half inning. The 3A & 4A divisions will play 3 outs.
 - 10) In the 2A division, the 10th batter in a half inning is NOT allowed to be intentionally walked. The pitcher MUST pitch to the batter.
 - 11) The stealing of bases is not allowed.
 - 12) A base runner must maintain contact with the base in which he/she is entitled to until a legally pitched ball has reached home plate.

- 13) A game tied at the end of regulation play shall be continued by playing additional innings until one side has scored more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning.
- 14) In all adaptive divisions (B, 1A & 2A), there will be NO in-field fly rule.
- 15) In the B & 1A divisions where there is a 200-ft. fence, a ball hit over the fence on the fly will be declared an out. If a ball bounces over the fence or rolls under the fence, it will be ruled a ground rule double.
- 16) "Time" will be called when the ball reaches the infield in fair territory with the defensive player in control of the ball and facing the play. **The infield will be defined as anywhere in the dirt, as long as it is in fair territory.** Any of the 10 defensive players on the field can call "Time" as long as they have both feet in the dirt and are in fair territory. In the B and 1A divisions, a "halfway line" will be drawn between the bases in order to detect which base the runner is awarded. Once the umpire calls time, if any part of the base runner's body is past the halfway line, the runner will be awarded that base. The runner will be sent back to a base if they have not reached the halfway mark.

"Time" can be called on the last batter of an inning; however, all runners and the batter will be awarded 1 base. This means that if a defensive player picks up the ball and immediately calls "Time" without trying to make a play, each base runner and batter will automatically receive one base, even if it is NOT a force play. This also means that if there is a runner on 3rd base, that runner will be awarded home and allowed to score. After "Time" is called and all runners have received their 1 base, then the half inning will be over.

Section G - SUBSTITUTIONS

- 1) Substitutions may be made any time the ball is dead.
- 2) **ONLY B Division teams** will have free substitution on defense. A coach may place any 10 defensive players on the field at any time. You do not have to report the changes. There are no substitutions in the batting order in the B division, however. The batting line-up will stay the same.
- 3) For all other divisions (1A, 2A, 3A, & 4A), **ANY** of the players (including substitutes) may be withdrawn and re-entered once, provided players occupy the same batting positions whenever in the line-up.
 - a. Violation of the re-entry rule is handled as a protest when brought

to the attention of the umpire by the offended team and may be made at any time during the game.

EFFECT: The illegal player is ejected. All play that occurred while the illegal entry was in the game will stand.

* FOR CLARIFICATION OF THE RE-ENTRY RULE, PLEASE REFER TO THE ASA RULE BOOK.

b. There are NO "pinch-runners" in any SOKY division. Substitutions may be used in the 1A, 2A, 3A & 4A divisions if an athlete needs a runner. In the B division ONLY, if a runner is injured (only) and cannot continue running the bases, the only acceptable solution is to replace him/her with the athlete on your team who made the last out of either that inning or if there are no outs, the previous inning. Once again, **this is for the B division only.**

4) In the 1A, 2A, 3A & 4A divisions, the "EP" may be substituted for at any time by a player who has not yet been in the game. This player will then become the "EP". The starting "EP" can re-enter.

Section H - UMPIRES AND THEIR DUTIES

- 1) Umpires shall conduct the games in accordance with the rules.
- 2) Umpires shall have the power to make all decisions on any points not specifically covered by the rules.
- 3) In case of injury to any player, the umpire will stop play.
- 4) A game may not be protested on any umpire's judgment call.
- 5) In the 4A and 3A divisions, a game called by the umpire (for darkness or weather) shall be regulation if 5 or more innings have been completed. The same rule applies in the 2A, 1A and B divisions except that 3 innings will constitute a regulation game.

Section I - PITCHING REGULATIONS

- 1) A legal delivery shall be one delivered with an underhand motion.
- 2) The pitcher shall take the position with at least 1 foot in contact with the pitcher's rubber. 1 foot must be in contact with the rubber upon release of the ball. This is for the 3A & 4A divisions only. The exception to this rule will

be in the 2A, 1A and B divisions. In the 2A division, the pitcher may move up to 40 feet to deliver a pitch. Thus not being in contact with the pitching rubber. In the B & 1A divisions, the Coach-Pitcher should stand where he/she feels they can best deliver a pitch to the current batter. The arch and speed will be at their discretion, **BUT they must remain at least 20 ft away from the front of home plate.**

- 3) A 16-ft. diameter circle around the pitcher's rubber will be added to the infield for the 1A and B divisions. This circle will serve as a boundary for the defensive pitcher. This player must remain within the circle until the batter has made contact with the ball.
- 4) In 2A-4A, the ball shall be delivered with an arc of at least 3 feet from the time it leaves the pitcher's hand until it reaches home plate. The pitched ball shall not reach a height of more than 10 feet at its highest point.
- 5) In 2A-4A, the speed of the pitch is left entirely to the judgment of the umpire. The umpire shall warn a pitcher who delivers a pitch with excessive speed. If the pitcher repeats such fast pitches after warning, he shall be removed from the pitcher's position for the remainder of the game.

Special Note - The amount of activity, and hence the enjoyment of participants, will depend greatly on the pitcher. Each team should have one of their better athletes pitching.

Section J – Batting Regulations

- 1) In the B Division ONLY, all eligible players should be listed on the line-up card (minimum of 9 and maximum of 15) in batting order. The B Division will play with the modified rule of 10 batters or 3 outs per half inning. All batters listed on the line-up card must bat in that order. There are no substitutions within the batting line-up in the B division.
- 2) In all divisions, if a team only has 9 athletes, when the "10th" batter comes up in the line-up, that team will have to take an out.
- 3) Each player of the team at bat shall come to the plate in the order in which his/her name appears on the score sheet.
- 4) In B & 1A divisions, "balls" will NOT be called. A pitched ball entering the appropriate strike zone will be called a strike. 3 strikes and a batter is out.

- 5) Batters & runners must wear a batting helmet **WITH** a chin strap.
- 6) In 2A-4A divisions, the umpire will call balls and strikes. 4 balls and a batter receives a walk. 3 strikes and a batter is out.

In the 2A, 3A & 4A divisions, the defensive team may intentionally walk a batter. This is a game strategy. To intentionally walk a batter, the pitcher or coach must inform the home plate umpire. IN THE 2A DIVISION, A TEAM MAY NOT INTENTIONALLY WALK THE 10th BATTER OF AN INNING.

- 7) In the 2A division, a batter will enter the box with no balls and no strikes. In the 3A & 4A divisions however, the batter will start out with a 1 ball and 1 strike count. This is an ASA rule.
- 8) In the B and 1A Divisions ONLY – A **COACH-PITCHER** will be used. Refer to Section F, #4 for specific clarifications for a Coach-Pitcher.
- 9) Foul Balls - In the 3A and 4A divisions, the batter will be declared out if he/she has 2 strikes and fouls off the next pitch. In the B, 1A & 2A divisions, a batter will not be declared out if he/she fouls off the 3rd strike. They will continue to get pitches until he/she strikes out or hits the ball.

Section K - COACHES BEHAVIOR

- 1) Coaches are expected to act at all times, in a manner which reflects a concern that the fairest and most positive competitive experience is equally available to every Special Olympics Athlete in a competition.
- 2) Please refer to the Special Olympics Kentucky Coaches Code of Conduct.
- 3) Coaches are responsible for knowing and understanding the rules of the game. Not only the modified rules in this manual, but also should have a working knowledge of ASA rules.
- 4) Coaches should reacquaint themselves with the current ASA rule regarding offensive conferences. Officials will enforce the rule of ONE (1) charged conference per inning.
- 5) ALL Coaches AND Managers **MUST** wear shirts adorning the team colors or a matching coach's shirt that adorns the team name.

6) Coaches and managers may **NOT** wear flip flops or sandals. Closed-toe shoes are required.

7) Cut-off sleeves are NOT acceptable by coaches or managers.

8) Base coaches or dugout coaches may wear denim pants or denim shorts, however as previously stated on page 20, Coach-pitchers may not wear denim.

9) Each team is allowed **6 coaches** per team. We highly recommend that 1 of these positions be used for your team scorebook keeper. The only people allowed to approach a game official during the game are coaches listed on the official roster. Therefore, if you have someone who keeps the scorebook for your team and you would like them to have the authority to approach an official, they need to be listed on your team roster, must dress as the other coaches on your team and must be an approved volunteer with the SOKY program.

Scorebook keepers do not have to sit in the dugout, but must sit close to the dugout. For Regional and State Tournaments, this person will wear a badge that says "Official Scorebook Keeper", and must be worn during the games in order to approach an official. Obviously, if your team does not keep a scorebook, this 6th coaching position can be used for dugout management, etc. Please remember that in order to be a coach or listed on the official roster form, a volunteer must be at least **16 years** of age and an approved volunteer.

Softball Roster Instructions

*Any NEW athletes to a softball team, who were not on the team's roster the previous year, MUST attend SOKY softball sign-ups or some type of screening before coaches can place them on their roster. This includes athletes new to the SOKY program and athletes who are changing teams from the previous year. Please notify the SOKY Office if you have any new athletes!

- 1) You will receive **2** roster forms throughout the season. The first form that you will receive will be the league roster form. This needs to be returned if you plan on participating in a league. The second roster form is the **Regional/State Roster Form**. This needs to be returned by the **July 15th** deadline in order to be considered for Regional and/or State Tournament play.
- 2) Only the athletes listed on the roster will be allowed to play in the SOKY Regional and State Tournaments.
- 3) Each athlete must have a **valid** medical before they participate with a Special Olympics Kentucky team.
- 4) Schools and/or organizations with more than one team should identify each team with a different nickname.
- 5) List all coaches who will be attending the state tournament. **All assistant coaches and/or chaperones must be 16 years of age or older.**
- 6) All information MUST be filled out on the roster before it will be accepted. Do not submit a roster form until all areas are complete! This information is used to locate the correct athlete in our computer systems.



REGIONAL/STATE Softball Roster Form

Team Name _____

Head Coach _____

Address _____

Phone(cell) _____ (home) _____

Circle your team's skill division: B 1A 2A 3A 4A
Skill divisions are subject to change according to teams' ability

The minimum roster size is ten (10) athletes and the maximum roster size is 15 athletes.

This form is necessary EVEN IF you have completed a League Roster Form already.

	Athlete's Name (Last name, first name)	Date of Birth	NEW to SOKY?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			

(OVER)

Bench credentials will be limited to **SIX (6)** coaches per team.

Assistant Coaches and Chaperones must be 16 years of age or older. **No one under the age of 16 will be allowed to sit on the bench or be on the field (with the exception of the athletes themselves).**

Please fill out ALL information for Coaches and Team Managers. Athlete team managers do NOT need bench credentials.

Your team will not be registered for any tournaments until this form is complete.

<u>Name</u> (first & last name)	<u>Address</u>	<u>DOB</u>
Head Coach		
Assistant Coach		
Assistant Coach		
Assistant Coach		
Assistant Coach		
Assistant Coach		

These 6 individuals will receive bench credentials.

<u>Name</u> (first & last name)	<u>DOB</u>	<u>NEW to SOKY?</u>
Athlete Team Managers		
Athlete Team Managers		

These athlete managers do not need bench credentials. Please use the exact name that is listed on the athletes' medical form.

If you wish to register additional people who help with your team do so here. Please note that these are additional chaperones, bus drivers, etc. and will **NOT** receive bench credentials. These individuals still need to be an approved volunteer within the SOKY Program.

Additional Personnel	Address	DOB
Additional Personnel	Address	DOB
Additional Personnel	Address	DOB

Rosters MUST be postmarked by July 15th

INDEX

BATS

All bats must have "Official Softball" printed on them and they must have taped or rubber covered handles at least 6 inches but no more than 15 inches long. (ASA rule). They must also not have any dents, dings, or signs of excessive wear.

BAT SIZE

Generally, the athlete should use a bat which suits his/her height and weight. Smaller and/or lighter players should use a light, (30 oz. to 32 oz.) bat. The bat should not measure more than 34 oz./34 inches.

GLOVES

Gloves are made for both left-handed and right-handed players. They are also made in junior and standard sizes. Most new gloves require a breaking in period. *Neats* foot oil helps condition and soften the leather.

HELMETS

All batters and baserunners MUST wear a batter's helmet with a chin strap. They are worn to protect a baserunner against an errant throw.

CATCHER'S EQUIPMENT

The catcher must wear a facemask or a batters helmet with a mask. The athlete's skull must be protected. Face masks and batter's helmet can be found at your local sporting goods stores.

CERTIFICATION

All Softball Coaches (Head and Assistant) are required to attend a Softball Basic Skills course to receive their coaching certification.

* All coaches should be familiar with Amateur Softball Association, (ASA) rules. If you are interested in getting an ASA Rules Book, you can call your local Parks and Recreation Department.

SOFTBALL TERMINOLOGY

Ball - When the pitched ball fails to cross the plate in the strike zone.

Base - One of four points, all of which must be touched in the proper order for a player to score a run.

Batter's Box - The area on either side of home plate in which the batter must stand while batting.

Diamond - The playing area made up of the three bases and home plate.

Double - A two base hit. A ball hit which allows the batter to make it to second base without stopping.

Extra Player - An additional offensive player which gives a team 11 hitters but still only 10 defensive players.

Fair Ball - A ball which is hit on or between the foul lines.

Foul Ball - A ball which is hit outside the foul lines.

Home Plate - The base over which the strike zone is located, and the last base which must be touched in order to score a run.

Home Run - A four base hit. A ball hit which allows the batter to touch all the bases and score a run without stopping.

Infielders - The defensive players who are positioned on or near the bases.

Line-up - The order in which the offensive team bats.

Out - When a batter's hit is caught, when the batter receives three strikes, or when a base runner is tagged or put out at a base.

Outfielders - The defensive players who are positioned behind the infielders.

Single - A one base hit. A ball hit which allows the batter to take first base only.

Strike - When a batter swings at and misses a pitched ball, allows a pitch to pass the plate in the strike zone without attempting to hit it, hits a foul ball or hits a foul tip.

Strike Zone - That space over any part of home plate between the batter highest (rear) shoulder and his knees when the batter assumes a natural batting stance.

Triple - A three base hit. A ball hit which allows the batter to make it to third base without stopping.

ADDITIONAL GAME TERMINOLOGY

Batter-baserunner is a term to identify the batter, who in one way or another, has finished a turn at bat and is moving from home plate to first base.

Batter refers only to the person at bat and does **NOT** describe the person running to first base.

Baserunner - You become a baserunner when you have reached first base without having been put out.

FAST FACTS ON BASERUNNING:

- In slow pitch softball, you may **NOT** leave a base until the ball is hit.
- First base and home plate are the two bases you may overrun.
- You are out if you step on home plate as you contact the ball with the bat. You are **NOT** out for stepping on home plate, but because you were out of the batter's box.
- **REMEMBER** once you have reached first base and are called safe, you make a judgement about continuing toward second base. Once you make an attempt to go to second base, you are liable to be tagged out - you are no longer allowed to return to first base freely.

Force Play - A force play occurs whenever a baserunner **MUST** go to the next base because of the batter's becoming a baserunner. When the batter goes to first base after hitting a ground ball, the runner already on first base is forced to go to second base. The runner is put out in a force play situation by the defense getting the ball to the base ahead of the runner.

TIP: When there are less than two outs and runners are on base in a force play situation, the fundamental defensive strategy is to get the lead runner - the runner closest to home plate.

Tag Play - A tag play situation occurs any time a runner is **NOT** in contact with a base and is **NOT** allowed to move to any base freely. i.e. a runner overrunning second base is not free to return to the base.

Double Play - An advanced play that calls upon the defense to get two outs from continuous action. The most common double play occurs with one or more runners on base in a force situation with less than two outs. A **double play** occurs anytime two players are put out during continuous action. i.e. a fly ball or line drive out and the baserunner is put out after failing to tag up.

Rundown - A rundown situation occurs when a runner is caught between bases by the defense. **Remember:** You may freely overrun first base and home plate, but **NOT** second or third base. Also, if you go toward second base after overrunning first base, the defense can make a play on you. Anytime you are off a base and **NOT** free to return to that base, you are potentially in a rundown situation by the defense.

KEEPING THE SCOREBOOK

- A designated person from each team should be responsible for keeping the scorebook. **THIS SHOULD BE A COACH**, and they should be listed on your roster form as a coach. This person's sole responsibility will be to keep the scorebook. He/she will dress like the other coaches, however he/she does not have to sit in the dugout. They do have to sit close to the dugout, however. Scorebook keepers will also be given a badge to wear during the tournament games which enables them to approach an official about a question about the scorebook.
- It is highly recommended that the person keeping the scorebook should also keep their opponents book. First, this helps you keep up with the official scorekeeper. Secondly, you have the tool now to assure that the opposing team is batting in the correct order and/or substituting properly.
- Keeping the book on your opponent allows you to gather information on how a team hits. You can adjust your defense to certain batters.

Every team should have at least one person designated to keep the scorebook - this person should know how to keep the book. **This is not required, but highly recommended.**

The first 2-3 pages of any scorebook show you how to properly keep the book. Official scorebooks can be purchased from your local sporting goods store.

SOFTBALL TEAM SKILLS COMPETITION

The Softball Team Skills Competition will be held in conjunction with the State Softball Tournament in September. The Skills Competition will be open to any team that did not qualify through Regional play for the State Tournament. Teams that participate in the Team Skills Competition will be a part of the **entire** State Tournament weekend including the dance on Saturday night.

To register your team you must submit the same roster that you turned in for the Regional Tournament. To qualify for awards, you must have a minimum of 9 players participate. If less than 9 players are registered or if less than nine players show-up for competition, the team will receive a Participation Ribbon only.

Teams will be placed in competitive brackets according to your division level. Scoring will be based on the following:

- Each player on a team will participate equally and each player's points will count toward the team's final score.
- After each individual player's points are added then all individual totals will be added together to get the team total. That total will then be divided by the total number of team members to obtain the team average. The team with the higher average in each division will be the division winner.

Team Softball Skills include; Base Running, Batting, Catching/Throwing and Fielding. The skills can be conducted in any order.

Team Skills Competition for the B & 1A divisions will include the following three skills; Base Running, Batting and Catching/Throwing.

Team Skills Competition for the 2A, 3A & 4A divisions will include all four skills; Base Running, Batting, Catching/Throwing and Fielding.

Base Running

1. Purpose

- To measure a team's base running skills

2. Description

- Set up on an infield using 65' baselines. Each athlete is instructed to start at home plate and run around the bases as fast as possible, touching each base in route.

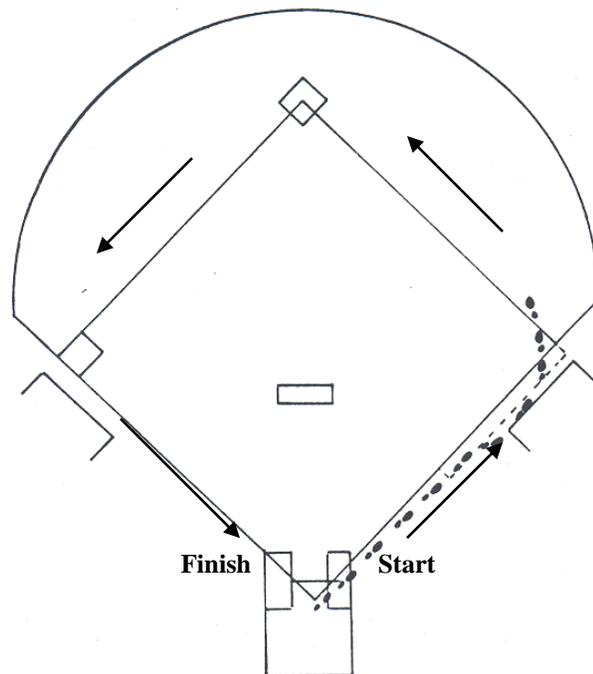
3. Scoring

- Time will begin when the athlete leaves home plate and stop when the athlete touches home plate after circling the bases. Zero points will be given to any athlete who misses or touches a base in improper order. Take each individual time and determine points awarded from the Base Running Point Scale.

Point Scale

0.0 -10.0 sec = 9 points
10.01-15.0 sec = 8 points
15.01-20.0 sec = 7 points
20.01-25.0 sec = 6 points
25.01-30.0 sec = 5 points
30.01-35.0 sec = 4 points
35.01-40.0 sec = 3 points
40.01-45.0 sec = 2 points
45.0 and over = 1 point

*Any athlete who misses a base, touches a base in improper order or who does not finish will receive **0 points.**



Catching/Throwing

1. Purpose

- To measure a team's ability to catch and throw a softball

2. Description

- Players should be instructed to stand in a straight line at the designated distance between each athlete, (see below). At the official's command, the first player at the beginning of the line will begin by throwing a ball to his/her teammate (the next player in line that is standing at the designated distance). Each player will catch the thrown ball then turn and throw the ball to the next teammate in line. When the ball gets to the last player in the line, that player then reverses the order back to the beginning of the line. The skill is complete when the ball is returned to the first player in line. This skill can be conducted on grass or dirt.

3. Scoring

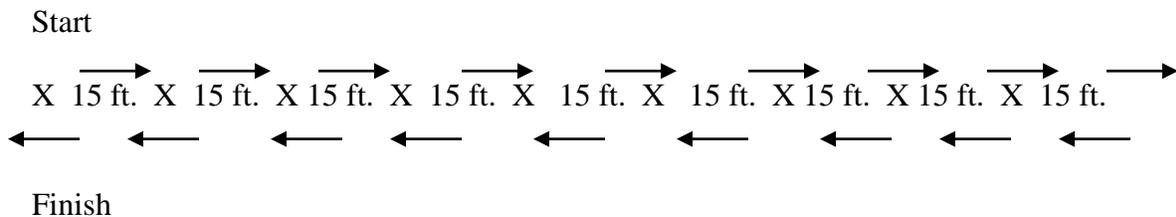
- Each team will receive 2 points for each successful catch and throw. If a ball is dropped, no points will awarded.

Designated distances between players:

B & 1A Division = stand 15ft. apart

2A, 3A & Open Divisions = stand 30ft. apart

X = player



Batting

1. Purpose

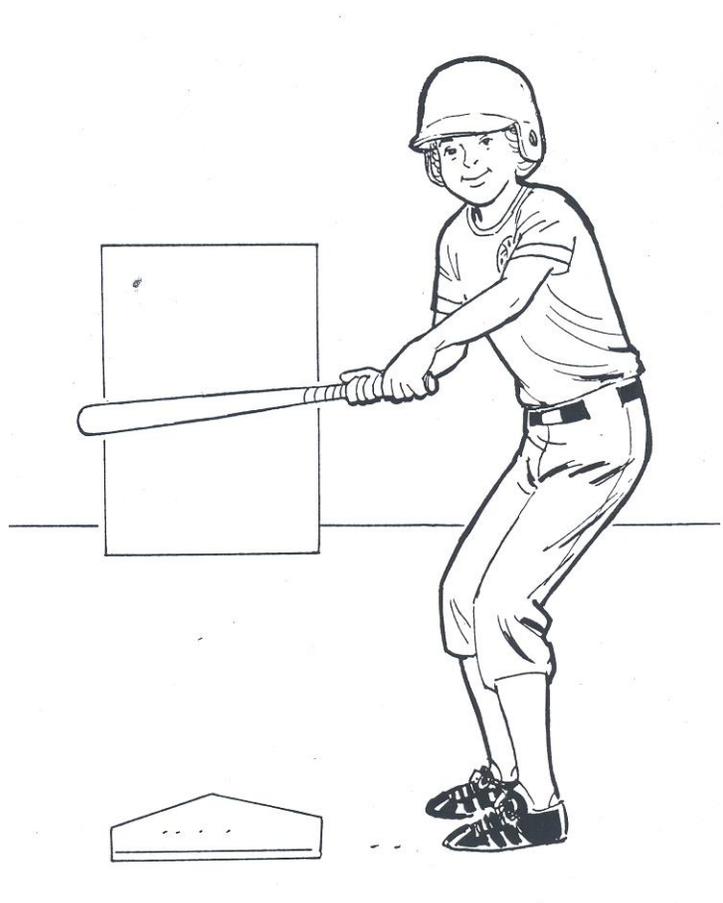
- To measure a team's ability to bat

2. Description

- Each player will get three attempts to hit a pitched ball. For B & 1A Divisions, the coach-pitcher will pitch and for the 2A, 3A, & 4A Divisions a volunteer official or coach will pitch to each player. Players will receive points for each ball hit in fair territory. With the exception of the batter and on-deck batters, all other teammates must remain in the dugout.

3. Scoring

- Each player will receive five points for a ball hit into the outfield: three points if the ball is hit into the infield; one point for a ball hit into foul territory and zero points for a missed attempt. (NOTE: Ball is scored from where it hits the ground and not from where it stops moving)



Fielding

(2A, 3A & 4A divisions only)

1. Purpose

- To measure a team's fielding ability

2. Description

- Athletes will take their positions on the playing field. There will be two groups of officials, one for the infield and one for the outfield. Officials will throw the ball to each player in his/her playing position. Points will be awarded for each ball that is fielded cleanly. Infield and outfield will be tested simultaneously. Each athlete will receive 2 attempts to field a thrown ball from a volunteer official.

3. Scoring

- Each athlete will receive five points for every cleanly fielded ball; two points for a ball that is blocked and/or knocked down and zero points for a missed attempt.

Recommended Procedure for Avoiding Heat Injury/Illness through Analysis of Heat Index and Restructuring of Activities Special Olympics Kentucky

Special Olympics' practices, competitions, and activities are often conducted outdoors. Heat problems often occur when athletes play too long and hard, and stay in the sun too long. Heat index calculations should be used to determine the appropriate precautions that should be taken to ensure athlete health and safety.

Heat Index:

A measurement of the air temperature in relation to the relative humidity, used as an indicator of the perceived temperature (how hot it actually feels.)

Problems that may arise as a result of high heat index levels include, but are not limited to, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.

Heat Cramps:

Painful cramps involving abdominal muscles and extremities cause by intense, prolonged exercise in the heat and depletion of salt and water due to profuse sweating. Symptoms include muscular pains and spasms, usually in the legs or abdomen.

Heat Exhaustion:

A condition characterized by faintness, rapid pulse, nausea, profuse sweating, cool skin, and collapse, caused by prolonged exposure to heat accompanied by loss of adequate fluid and salt from the body.

Heat Stroke:

A disturbance of the temperature-regulating mechanisms of the body caused by overexposure to excessive heat, resulting in fever, hot and dry skin, and rapid pulse, sometimes progressing to delirium and coma.

Coach Responsibility:

Coaches must play an active role to ensure their athletes are prepared for and protected from the weather. All athletes should consume plenty of water to ensure hydration well before exposure to the heat and each athlete should be provided with individual water bottles. If necessary, it is the coach's duty to find shade for their team, provide cold towels, etc. **Providing these things is not the responsibility of the Tournament Officials.**

The following heat index scale should be used to determine appropriate participation procedures. This recommended procedure should be used until such time as the temperature is below 80 degrees as no combination of heat and humidity at that level will result in a need to limit activity.

*Any time restructuring of an activity is necessary the heat index should be re-checked every 30 minutes to ensure there has not been an increase.

Heat Index

Under 95 degrees

Procedure

- Provide ample amounts of water.
- Must take water breaks.
- Ice-down towels for cooling.
- Watch/monitor athletes carefully.

95 degrees to 99 degrees

- Provide ample amounts of water.
- Must take water breaks.
- Ice-down towels for cooling.
- Watch/monitor athletes carefully.
- Alter uniform by removing items if possible.
- Reduce time of outside activity.
- Consider postponing practice to later in the day.

100 degrees to 102 degrees

- Provide ample amounts of water.
- Must take water breaks.
- Ice-down towels for cooling.
- Watch/monitor athletes carefully.
- Alter uniform by removing items if possible.
- Allow for changes to dry t-shirts and shorts.
- Reduce time of outside activity as well as indoor activity if air conditioning is unavailable.
- Postpone activity to later in the day.

Above 102 degrees

- Stop all outside activity and stop all inside activity if air conditioning is unavailable. Best efforts will be made to reschedule.