

Junior Division Rules
National Wheelchair Softball Association
(NWSA)



NWSA Junior Division wheelchair softball is played according to the rules and regulations of the NWSA and the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) except wherein modifications, deletions and additions have been made, as follows:

Eligibility-Section 1

1. Players must be 21 years old or under and enrolled in a recognized high school program. For a player over the age of 18 years old to be eligible 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 an eligible high school program if the player has not yet received and is attempting to achieve his or her high school diploma.
2. The Junior Division will not adhere to a point system for disability classification to play. Players 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, lower extremity amputation, or shunt problems that affect mobility/coordination/ strength/endurance as determined by the NWSA Junior Commissioner. However, exemptions to this

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rule may be applied under the discretion of the NWSA Junior Commissioner (i.e. able body athletes to fill a roster).

3. Players in the Junior Division are allowed to also play on an Adult Division team during the regular season. For the NWSA National Championships a player in the Junior Division can participate in the Adult and/or Junior tournament under the discretion of the NWSA Junior Commissioner.

4. Players in the Junior Division are allowed to play on both a Junior Division Varsity and JV team during the regular season. However, for the NWSA Junior National Championships a player must choose to play only on a Varsity or a Junior Varsity team, not both. 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. The official game ball is a deBeers XF14 14" White Softie Gymball Clincher Seam.

2. All bats must be softball or tee-ball bats. Baseball bats are not allowed.

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3. All players must use a manual wheelchair. Use of a power wheelchair or assist devices on wheels are not allowed except for players participating with such as of the 2014 season are grandfathered in for the remainder of their eligibility.
4. 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.).
5. Players that have trouble with catching a ball may wear a glove on either or both hands regardless of position (including pitcher).
6. All batters, fielders, and catchers are allowed to wear a helmet but are not required.
7. 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 batter's box in order to reach the tee.
8. All team members should wear uniforms of the same color and style. Uniforms are allowed to be altered to ensure safety for players. Each player must have a number on the back of their uniform.

Game Play-Section 4

1. Game length is six innings, however, no new inning can be started after one hour and five minutes of play. The time limit will not apply to the championship game of a tournament.
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 players 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 (see Section 2, Article 5).

4a. At the Varsity level of play, each half inning will begin with players pitching to opposing players. If a pitcher walks three consecutive batters in a half inning, the fielding team can elect to allow the opposing coach to pitch to his or her own players for the balance of that half inning, but each half inning from then on will again start with a player pitching to the opposing team.

4b. At the JV level of play, coaches will pitch to their own players. The JV player playing in the pitchers position must have at least one wheel (including front caster or rear wheel) within the exterior outline of the pitcher's mound area while the coach is pitching.

5. When pitching there should be an attempt to have a minimum arc of six feet and maximum arc of 12 feet, but the pitch will be allowed if there is a "noticeable" amount of arc in the umpire's discretion.

5a. Player pitch: If a pitch does not have the required arc, the pitch will be called an illegal pitch by the umpire. In the Junior Division, runners will not advance on an illegal pitch.

5b. Coach pitch: If a coach is pitching to his or her own team, the umpire will issue a warning to the coach and the pitch will not count. 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. In the Junior Division, players will begin with 1-1 count. 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.

9. Each player receives one courtesy foul ball on the last strike. If the ball is hit into foul territory after the one courtesy foul ball is awarded it is then counted as a strike. If a batter using a tee hits only the tee, a foul ball will be called.

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10. A base on balls are awarded whenever a player is pitching to the opposing team but are not awarded when a coach is pitching to his or her own team. Intentional walks are not allowed at the Junior Division.

11. If a hit ball hits the coach pitching the result of the play is a dead ball and the ball is re-pitched.

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. The Rover position in the Junior Division is to be used as a 4th outfielder who must play behind the outfield retainer line.

15. There will be a five run limit for the first three innings. No run limit will be administered after the first three innings.

16. If a team is ahead by 15 runs after three innings or 10 runs after five innings, the game will be called.

17. 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. In tournament pool play, however, the game is allowed to end in a tie (for scheduling).

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

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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.

Additional Tournament Rules – Section 7

1. The Junior Division National Tournament is an opportunity for physically challenged athletes to travel and compete against other teams from around the country. The host city chairperson with input from the Junior Division Commissioner will establish a tournament bracket in the best interest of growing the sport. All teams registering for the tournament are placed in one bracket for pool play and use varsity rules. Teams traveling to the national tournament that may be novice with inexperienced players may request that a JV division be established so that a better tournament experience for younger children can be established. Novice team may use coach pitch at their request to the Junior Division Commissioner. The decision to create a JV division at the national tournament rests with the Junior Division Commission and the host team chairperson.

2. If a tie breaker between teams is necessary at any point of the tournament for teams with similar records the following process will be used:

- A. Pool play overall record (win-loss)
- B. Results from head to head matchups in pool play
- C. Number of runs allowed by a team in pool play
- D. Number of runs scored by a team in pool play
- E. Coin toss

3. Able-Bodied Play – In the interest of growing the sport, promoting a family atmosphere and assisting coaches with filling their roster, the Junior Division Commissioner may allow able-bodied players to play under the following conditions:

- A. The able-bodied player must be 12 years old or younger (verified by the Commissioner)
- B. Only 1 able-bodied player can play the infield. The rest must play the outfield.

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C. An able-bodied player is not eligible for an MVP, Sportsmanship, or all-tournament award.

4. Player eligibility – A player certified to play in the NWBA Junior Division is eligible to play in the NWSA Junior World Series tournament. A player's eligibility that is not certified by the NWBA must provide a copy of their birth certificate to certify age eligibility. The Junior Division Commissioner will make the final determination of age eligibility based on all available information.

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.

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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 _____ _____ Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

whose school records show his or her 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