

FHCASA PLAYING RULES

Basic ISA Rules Govern with the Following FHCASA/ISA Rule Exceptions
As amended March 1, 2016

1. THE PLAYERS

- A. Age Qualification – December 31 is the official cutoff date. Any member whose birthday (50, 60, etc.) occurs on or before December 31 of that current year is eligible to play with a team registered in that age bracket or a lower age bracket.
- B. Player Identification – A player shall provide proof of identity when requested to do so by an Officer, Director, or Commissioner of the FHCASA. A player shall be declared ineligible until he furnishes proper proof of identity which shall be his FHCASA registration card and photo identification.
- C. All players on a team shall reside in the respective Area (1, 2, etc.) from which the team is registered. **Exceptions:** Any player that moves his place of residence from one area to another may remain grandfathered on the one (1) primary team roster that he was a member of when he moved in the area from which he moved.
- D. A player shall play for only one team on a tournament weekend.
- E. **Uniforms** -- All players on a team shall properly wear uniforms that are alike in base color, trim and style. If, because of the blood rule, a change is required and the uniform part does not match, the player will not be penalized. The FHCASA Commissioner or site director shall make all determinations as to whether a player is in compliance with this Rule.
 - 1. Pitchers are not permitted to wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thigh that could be distracting to the batter.
 - 2. Players may wear solid colored undergarments beneath their uniform shirts and/or shorts.
 - 3. Numbers must be worn on all uniforms. Numbers on front or back of uniform must be a minimum of 6" tall. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers.
RESULT: Plate Umpire and Team Manager will insure that it is corrected immediately or one of the players will be removed from the game.
 - 4. Ball caps or visors must be worn properly. No hard visors of any kind are allowed except if a part of a protective helmet.
 - 5. Casts, prosthesis and metal braces may be worn; however, any part of the brace or support must be covered by soft material and taped.

2. THE PLAYING RULES

- A. **Time Limit:** A time limit of sixty (60) minutes shall be allotted in regular game play. When the sixty (60) minutes expires, the teams shall finish that inning and play one more complete inning if necessary. **In the event the score is tied at the end of the extended inning, the "Texas Tie-Breaker" is to be used to complete the game with the player who was the last batter to complete his time at bat to be placed on second base to start each additional half inning.** *The Courtesy runner rule may be applied at this point.*
- B. The clock is to be stopped in the event of an injury requiring medical attention.
- C. The clock is to be started when all players are on the field and the umpire calls "play ball".
- D. **Courtesy Runners:** Unlimited courtesy runners are allowed at any time and may be anyone on the roster. A courtesy runner is in the game once the base is touched. A player shall be a courtesy runner only once per inning. A runner may not replace a courtesy runner, **except** for injury. The injured player must be removed from the line-up

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and cannot return to the game. Any player replaced by a courtesy runner may not become a courtesy runner in the same inning. **Penalty** for use of an ineligible courtesy runner shall be the removal of the runner from the base and **an out is recorded** against the base runner for which the courtesy runner is used. In the event a courtesy runner is on base when it becomes his turn at bat, he shall be declared out, and take his turn at bat. **Exception:** A substitute is entered into the line-up for the player on base. That player on base remains a courtesy runner but is otherwise removed from the line-up. Per the rules of substitution, the original player may re-enter the game.

- E. **Offense:** An offensive team may designate up to 15 players in the batting order. The offensive team shall have a minimum of nine (9) players present to start and finish a game in the 50s and 60s Divisions and a minimum of ten (10) players shall be present to start and finish in the 65s, 70s and 74s Divisions.
- F. **Defense:** A defensive team shall designate a minimum of nine (9) present players to take the field. 50s and 60s Divisions may field any ten (10) players in the line-up. 65s, 70s and 74s shall field a minimum of ten players to take the field and may field any eleven (11) players in the line-up. Defensive players may play anywhere on the playing field in fair territory.
- G. **In the event of an injury and the injured player is removed from the game** and he is unable to take his subsequent times at bat. If there is no substitute player to replace the injured player, an out shall be recorded the next time it is the injured player's time to appear at the plate. Subsequent to that appearance the lineup will compress and no out will be assessed for any further times that the injured player would have batted. Additionally, the injured player is not allowed to play for the rest of that day's scheduled games.
- H. **Balls and Strikes:** There shall be four (4) balls and three (3) strikes. The batter shall start his turn at bat with the count of one (1) ball and (1) strike. On the first foul ball after two (2) strikes, the batter is out and the ball shall be declared dead. **Exception:** The third strike foul ball is a fly ball caught by a defensive fielder and results in two (2) outs or less. **Result:** The batter is out. The ball is live. Runners must tag and may advance at their own risk.
- I. **Pitcher's Box:** The pitcher's plate is located fifty (50) feet from the rear point of home plate. The pitcher's box consists of an area from the front of the pitcher's plate extending back six (6') feet perpendicular to the pitcher's plate. This permits the pitcher to release the ball from an area between fifty (50') and fifty-six (56') feet from home plate. To deliver the ball the pitcher shall have **one or both** feet in contact with the pitcher's plate or within the pitcher's box. **He shall come to a complete stop and one foot must remain in contact** with the pitcher's plate or the pitcher's box **as the ball is released.** A step may be taken in any direction, with the free foot, simultaneously with the release of the ball. The pitcher shall be facing the batter when delivering the pitch.
- J. **Strike Zone Plate/Mat:** A strike zone mat shall be used. From the top of the plate, including the mat, the area shall measure 19"x34.5" Each legal pitch delivered with a minimum arc of six (6') feet from the ground and a maximum of twelve (12') feet from the ground, not swung at, that touches any portion of the plate/mat shall constitute a strike on the batter.

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- K. Catcher's Box:** The top catcher's box is the back line of the batter's box. It measures eight feet one inch (8'1") wide by ten (10') feet deep. The catcher must remain within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitched ball is batted, touches the ground, home plate/mat or reaches the catcher's box.
- L. Commitment Line:** The commitment line shall be marked in foul territory twenty (20') feet from home plate at a ninety (90°) degree angle to the third base line. Once runners have touched the ground on or past the commitment line, defensive players can only put the runner out by touching home plate while holding the ball prior to the runner touching the scoring plate. (runner cannot be touched). **Note:** Once a runner passes the commitment line, he shall not return across the line toward third base. **Result:** The runner is out.
- M. Base Running:** Base stealing will not be permitted in FHCASA Senior Programs. A second home plate shall be placed adjacent to the left rear corner of the right handed batter's box as if the first base line continued to the point of the second home plate. Runners shall touch the second home plate in order to be safe. Runners will be called out and the ball will remain live if they touch or cross any portion of the original home plate. At no time shall the defensive player touch the runner. **Result:** The runner will be called safe. **Safety Note:** **A runner who intentionally slides into the second home plate will be called out!**
- N. Safety Base:** A safety base is mandatory for first base. The safety base shall be placed so that the white portion is where first base normally would be and the colored portion is located in foul territory. **A batter/runner shall touch the colored portion of the base on the initial play to the base. This does not require an appeal to the field umpire.** **Result:** If the runner has been determined to have hit the wrong bag, batter/runner is out. **Exceptions:** (1) If there is no defensive play to be made at first base, the batter/runner may touch the white bag. (2) On balls hit to the outfield, the batter/runner may touch either the white bag or the safety bag. **After the initial play, the white base and the colored base shall be treated as a single base.** A runner may be in contact with either base as play continues. **Safety Note:** **A runner who intentionally slides into the safety base shall be called out!** **Note:** (1) A batter/runner who does not discard his bat before reaching first base, shall be called out.
- O. Run Rule**
- (50+ Division):** A game shall be deemed over and the winner declared when a team scores a total of twenty (20) runs or greater than its opponent by the conclusion of the third (3rd) inning; by a team scoring fifteen (15) runs or greater than its opponent by the conclusion of the fourth (4th) inning; by a team scoring twelve (12) runs or greater than its opponent by the conclusion of the fifth (5th) inning or later.
 - (60+ Division):** The game shall be deemed over and the winner declared when a team is 14 runs or more ahead after the completion of the 5th inning or later.
 - (65+ and 70+ Divisions):** The game shall be deemed over and the winner declared when a team is 15 runs or more ahead after the completion of the 5th inning or later.

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- P. Ejections:** Players ejected by an umpire shall sit out the next game at which the player is present. All ejections are subject to FHCASA Board review and possible further action.
- Q. Appeal of Rules:** All appeals shall be made prior to the first pitch to the next scheduled batter or the defensive infielders and pitcher have left the field of play.
- 1. Procedure:** Any player or manager of the two teams playing may ask the home plate umpire for time out. Once granted, the player or manager may ask whichever umpire who made the call of the rule in question, to explain the rule as it relates to the call. If a mutual understanding is not met, the player or manager may request that the umpire appeal the call to the umpire's partner.
 - 2. Umpire Judgment:** Decisions may not be appealed on grounds that an umpire was not correct involving:
 - a.** Any decision of a ball or strike.
 - b.** That a runner was safe or out.
 - c.** That a batted ball was fair or foul.

Exception: In the event of a possible "pulled foot", a tag to the outside or an umpire making a call while not in the best position, a player or manager may **request** that the umpire making the call ask the second umpire if the second umpire saw anything different. **Once the request has been honored, the decision is final.**
- R. Protests:** All disputes arising during tournament play must be resolved at the point of protest. Any protest that is filed after the game is completed and teams have left the field or at any time after the tournament is completed is considered to be invalid.
- 1. Protest of Playing Rules:** In the event of disagreement resulting in protest of the playing rules, the game clock shall be stopped and the parties shall contact the Umpire-In-Charge (U.I.C.) or Commissioner who will hear the disagreement and render a final decision.
 - 2. Protest of Personnel Rules:** In the event of disagreement resulting in protest of ineligible players or related matters, the game clock shall be stopped and the parties shall contact one of the following: the Commissioner; any Officer of the FHCASA known to be at the complex; the tournament host. The contacted party(s) shall render a decision. All decisions of protest are subject to review by the FHCASA Board of Directors or their designated agents.
- S. Home Run Hit and Sit:** In the event of an over the fence home run, the batter may proceed directly to the dugout without touching a base and any baserunners are not required to touch an additional base and may also proceed to the dugout. A "four base award" or "four base error" is also included under the provisions of the Hit and Sit rule.
- T. Game Balls:** All tournament balls must be approved by the Board of Directors (currently the TRUMP 44 core .375 compression ball). Balls shall be provided by the tournament host and shall be the same make and quality for all games. Each starting game of the day shall have 2 new balls and each succeeding game shall have at least 1 new ball.
- U. Game Bats:** Altered bats are bats that have been cosmetically changed in such a manner to mask the true identity of the bat, have been changed in any way from the original manufactured

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product such as plug removed, end load changed, walls thinned or has anything foreign added to the bat other than a legal safety grip device or tape at the handle.

1. Vising, rolling or any other process that exerts more pressure on the bat other than the typical bat and ball collision is considered altering a bat
2. Bats that have been worn due to normal usage but still retain the legal markings are approved for use as long as the appropriate marks are legible.
3. Cracked or damaged bats and bats that cannot be identified are not altered bats but shall be removed from play by the umpire or director. A player returning with a bat removed from play shall receive the same penalty as if using an altered bat.

Altered Bat Procedure

- A. Directors and/or umpires can confiscate any bat believed to have been altered. The bat, at FHCASA's option, may be sent to either ISA's National Office or the manufacturer for testing. If the bat tests within standards, it will be returned to the player. If deemed to be altered, the user is immediately suspended for a period of 5 years
- B. If, through onsite inspection, the director is able to confirm that the bat has been altered, the penalty shall immediately take effect.
- C. If the director must confiscate the bat for further testing, the game shall resume and penalties (if any) will be implemented at the time of determination.
- D. The accused player must voluntarily allow the bat inspection by the FHCASA representative or by any means determined acceptable by the FHCASA. This includes on the spot testing, field testing or, sending the bat to the manufacturer for testing.
- E. If the bat must be sent for testing,
 - a. The director shall remove the tape or rubber grip on the handle, and write down the ID number and give it to the player as a receipt.
 - b. If necessary, the FHCASA will send the bat to the manufacturer for testing.

Altered Bat Policy

- A. In addition to the altered bat confiscation procedure stated above, the FHCASA will confiscate the bat and ball when a player is struck directly by a batted ball and the testing process will take place.
- B. FHCASA reserves the right to confiscate, for testing or inspection, any equipment deemed questionable for legal FHCASA play.
- C. Anytime a bat is tested on site and the bat fails the onsite test, the player is to be removed for the remainder of the tournament.

Altered Bat Penalty

Any player who either knowingly or unknowingly uses an altered bat in FHCASA sanctioned play will be subject to the following penalties:

- A. If the player refuses to hand the bat over to the director, the player will immediately be ejected from the game/tournament and receive a lifetime suspension from FHCASA play. If the player turns the bat over and onsite testing confirms that the bat has been altered, the player will be ejected from the game/tournament and receive a five (5) year suspension from FHCASA play. If the player turns the bat over and onsite testing is inconclusive, at the discretion of the Board of the FHCASA, the bat may be sent to the ISA National Office or to the manufacturer for

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additional testing. The player will be allowed to continue playing until the test process is completed.

- B. If it is determined after the completion of the game that the bat had been altered, the results of the game shall stand.
- C. If it is determined by the manufacturer that the bat was altered, the player will be suspended for five (5) years from participation in FHCASA activities. If it is determined that the bat was not altered and not illegal for use in FHCASA tournament, then the FHCASA will replace the bat at FHCASA expense.

3. INCLEMENT WEATHER – 2 - 2 Count Format

A. 50+ and 60+ Age Divisions

In the event of inclement weather forcing a change in scheduling, the Commissioner, Tournament Director, and Chairman of the FHCASA may invoke the 2 - 2 Count Format. Batters can either put the first pitch in play by hitting it fair or take the pitch if it is a ball, resulting in a 3 - 2 count. If the first pitch is a called strike or is batted foul ball, the result is an out and the ball is dead. **Exception:** If the third strike foul ball is a fly ball with less than two outs caught by a defensive fielder **Result:** The batter is out. The ball is live. Runners may tag and advance at their own risk. With a 3 - 2 count, batters can put the second pitch in play by hitting it fair or take a ball for a walk. If the second pitch is called a strike or batted foul then the result is an out.

- 1. Time Limits. All games will be played under the 40 minute time limit, when the alarm goes off, the inning being played will be completed and the game ended. The only exception being that at the end of that inning, the score is tied, then the "Texas Tie Breaker" will be used. Each half inning will begin with the last scheduled batter from the previous inning on 2nd base until such time as the game has been completed with one team or the other ahead at the end of the inning. The Courtesy runner rule may be applied at this point.
- 2. All teams MUST be at the field one full game time before their next scheduled game and must be ready in case there is an early start time. Scheduled time is merely a guide and games will start immediately following the completed game.
- 3. Warmups & Between Outs. One minute will be allowed for 3 warmup pitches, and 1 round of infield practice at the start of the game. Once the game has started **ONE** warmup pitch is allowed and no infield practice. After a play has been completed and the umpire has called time, the ball will be returned directly to the pitcher.
- 4. Any game partially completed on Saturday will be completed on resumption of play with the regular format and then any additional games will be played under the 2-2 Count Format.
- 5. In the event, the tournament has started under 2-2 Count Format or weather has caused the tournament to continue under those conditions on the first day, if weather conditions allow the second day can be played under standard format and playing rules.

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B. 65+, 70+ and 74+ Age Divisions

In the event of inclement weather forcing a change in the scheduling, the playing rules indicated in Section 3. A. shall be implemented with the following exception:

Exception: Time limit for these Divisions shall be a 30 minute clock. When time expires, the Plate Umpire shall announce to both teams that "Time has expired. We will finish this inning and play an Open Inning."

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Playing Rules for the Pitching Screen

Eff. Date: May 1, 2015

1. Pitching screen must cover at least half of the pitching plate. The pitching screen can cover the entire pitching plate. The pitcher may pitch from either side of the screen as long as he has one foot located within the pitcher's box or in contact with the pitching plate.

2. Pitching screen may be placed no more than 4 ft. in front of the rubber, and must remain in front of the rubber.

3. Once the screen is in place it may not be moved in that 1/2 inning, unless a pitching change is made or the screen is knocked out of place. An incoming pitcher may adjust the screen so long as it applies to 1. and 2. above.

4. Pitchers must still release the ball with at least one foot on the pitching rubber or planted for one full second within the box defined by the width of the rubber and extending 6' back from the rubber.

5. If the batter hits the screen for the first time during an at bat, no matter how hard it is hit or whether it is a grounder or line drive, it shall be ruled a dead ball strike and all runners must return to the base they were occupying when the pitch was thrown.

6. If the batter hits the screen a second time during an at bat, no matter how hard it is hit or whether it is a grounder or line drive, it shall be ruled a dead ball, the batter is out, and all runners must return to the base they were occupying when the pitch was thrown.

7. After the pitcher releases the ball, he must move behind the pitching screen. Once the ball is hit, he is free to attempt to field the ball, if he can. If, in the umpires' opinion, the pitcher does not get behind the screen after he releases any pitch, he shall issue a warning to the pitcher indicating that next time the pitcher does not get behind the screen after releasing a pitch, he will be removed from the position of pitcher, and the team will be required to insert another pitcher. The removed pitcher may stay in the lineup, and may play any other position, but cannot pitch. If a warning has not been issued to the pitcher and he fields a ball without getting behind the screen, the umpire shall call it a dead ball, with the batter being awarded first base and any forced runners will move up one base. The umpire shall then issue a warning to the pitcher. If the pitcher has already received a warning, the umpire shall make the same call, with the batter being awarded first base and any forced runners will move up one base. The pitcher shall then be removed

from that position.

8. A live ball thrown ball from any fielder that hits the net shall remain in play.

9. If there are two strikes on a batter and the next batted ball hits the screen, the result is the batter is out.

10. In a rain-shortened tourney using the 2-2 count, the first batted ball hits the screen. The result is the batter is out.