

# 2025 Racine County Girls Fastpitch Association

## League Rules and Regulations

The role of managers and coaches is to **teach** our girls about the sport of fastpitch softball. Developing good sportsmanship and responsible citizens through fair play and teamwork is as important as developing a winning attitude.

### ***RULES***

1. All teams will follow the **NFHS** rulebook except for the following changes. **The following written changes are in addition to the NFHS rulebook.** Any rules or manuals published prior to this edition are void.

### ***THE COMMISSION***

1. One voting representative from each participating community shall serve on the Commission. Roles are voted on by each Commissioner.
2. The following community's girls youth programs make-up the Racine County Girls Fast Pitch Association: Caledonia, City of Racine, Raymond, Sturtevant, Union Grove, Wind Lake, and Yorkville. The Commission must approve any additional communities or changes on an annual basis.
3. Each community shall have only one vote on the Commission on matters to be voted on.
4. The commissioners will vote the president of the Commission during their annual in for a one-year December meeting.  
term runs from January 1st until December 31st.
5. The Commission may, if needed, call a general coaches meeting. If any matters need to be voted on at these meetings, each team will have one vote.
6. A majority of commission members are required to be present to conduct official business for the league. Motions to be voted on by the Commission will be carried by a simple majority.
7. The posts of secretary, treasurer, and recording secretary along with other assigned duties will be appointed by the president annually from January 1st until December 31<sup>st</sup>.

### ***ELIGIBILITY***

1. In Pinto Girls, players who are **currently** in 2nd-5th Grade at time of registration are eligible.
2. In Junior Girls, players who are **currently** in 5th-8th Grade at time of registration are eligible.
3. In Senior Girls, players who are **currently** in 8th-12th Grade are at time of registration are eligible.

4. Players may play up into a higher league with local commissioner's approval, but may not play down into a lower league. (Exception 8<sup>th</sup> graders can play in Juniors and/or Senior league)
5. Anyone who lives outside the County but pays school taxes in Racine County on their principal residence, can roster their children in the Racine County Girls Fast Pitch Association. (Wind Lake pays schools taxes to Waukesha County and girls from Muskego are eligible.)
6. There shall be an agreement among managers not to pilfer players from another community. The Commission will settle disputes.
7. In the event that a team drops from the league **before** the season begins, players may join another team in their division. If the team is reinstated, the players must return to their original team.
8. If a team drops from the league **after** the season starts, the commission will handle the transfer of players from one team to another for the current season only.

5th Grade Girls will be left to the discretion of the parents based on their experience on whether they register for pinto or junior league. It is strongly encouraged that the community commissioner is involved and uses their best judgement on the final decision. In this case a player that has signed up in the Junior league, the player is not eligible to play down to the Pinto league at any time during the season (without league commission approval)

A team is limited to utilizing a 5th grade girl to **Pitch** for a total of 6 outs throughout the game. They are able to play the entire game.

5th Graders must be marked with an asterisk on the lineup when exchanged with the opposing team.

Junior league eligibility will be extended to 8th grade girls.

A team is limited to utilizing an 8th grade girl to **Pitch** for a total of 6 outs throughout the game. 8th Graders must be marked with an asterisk on the lineup when exchanged with the opposing team.

## ***UMPIRES***

1. The home team will furnish one umpire for each game. All umpires must be familiar with league and NFHS rules. The home team will furnish the home plate umpire who will be the umpire in chief. The visiting team has the option of supplying a qualified base umpire at their own cost for regular season games. The umpire in chief cannot overrule a base umpire.
2. The official scorebook will be the home team's book. The plate umpire should verify the score after each half inning.
3. Umpires must be at least 14 years old for Pinto and at least 16 years old for Junior and 17 years old for Senior games.
4. All umpires must have a copy of the current RCGFA rules and are encouraged to attend an umpire clinic conducted annually by the communities.

5. Compensation for umpires is the responsibility of the home team organization. League appointed umpires are the responsibility of the Racine County Girls Fastpitch Association.

### ***UMPIRES DECISION***

1. The league recognizes that an Umpire's decision can sometimes be questioned. A judgment call cannot be protested. If the Umpire and two Coaches can't settle a dispute in a calm manner, the game can be played under protest. The NFHS rulebook and league rules will be used.

**2. Keeping in mind the difficulty in obtaining Umpires and the favor they are doing for us, there will be some restraint used by Coaches concerning disagreements.**

3. There will be no appeal on a missed base or for leaving a base early. (The umpire must see the player miss the base and make the call.)

### ***PROTEST: Three Types***

1. Misinterpretation of a playing rule must be made before the next pitch or, if on the last play of the game, before the Umpire leaves the playing field.

2. Illegal substitute or re-entry must be made while they are in the game and before the Umpire leaves the playing field.

3. Ineligible player protests can be made anytime. The commission will determine decisions of eligibility.

### ***EQUIPMENT***

1. Local organizations are responsible for all of their own equipment and league fees.

2. The home team must furnish **TWO** fluorescent yellow .47 core .375 compression Un-played balls for each game.

3. Mended bats are not approved or acceptable for league games and will be removed from the game. All other NFHS rules regarding bats will be enforced in all leagues. The bats shall be labeled fastpitch softball by the manufacturer.

4. All league players and other non-adults must wear approved batting helmets while within the confines of the playing area. The only exception is when a helmet falls off naturally while running the bases. Players removing their helmets on the base paths will be called out at the time of infraction. Batting helmets with facemasks are optional for batters.

5. All players must wear a shirt with a unique identifying number. Numbers must be visible. Any

6. No metal spikes will be allowed at Pinto and Junior level. Seniors may wear metal spikes.

## **THE TEAM**

1. The final day for entering a team in any league will be May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Team rosters and waivers are due before the scheduled coaches meeting and can be submitted to a Commissioner or the Recording Secretary. **NOTE: Teams will forfeit all games until they submit their roster**
2. All girls must be registered, on a team roster, and have participation fees paid by preseason Coach's meeting to play in a game. Any late registrations require commission approval.
3. The final day to add a player to a team roster is June 1st and must have Commission approval. The added player must wait a 3-day waiting period before being considered eligible to play. A violation of this will result in forfeit of games played with the added players.
4. League fees must be paid before the coaches meeting. The penalty for this shall be forfeiture of all games played prior to the payment of fees. The Commission determines these fees annually. Fees for 2025 is \$300 per team.
5. Rosters must include the player's name, age, date of birth, phone number and complete address. Rosters cannot exceed 20 players per team.
6. Lineup cards with batting order will be exchanged between coaches prior to every game. All players must be listed by their name and uniform number. A late arriving player can be added to the lineup if they are listed on the team roster. **Failure to do so is forfeiture of the game.**
7. Teams having over age players will forfeit all games in which they play. Submit that players name and team to your local commissioner.
8. Younger players who are rostered on a lower division team in the same community may cross over to the higher league so that a team has enough players for a legal game.
9. **No** player playing up with a higher league may play more than a rostered player on the same team. Otherwise normal substitution rules apply.
10. Coaches must notify the opposing manager and the umpire at the time lineup cards are exchanged of any lower league player's crossing over, including the team the player is normally a member of.
11. Only rostered players, coaches and one official scorer are **allowed** in the dugout or on the field during a game.
12. Teams may start a game with only 8 eligible players. The ninth spot will NOT be an out.
13. If a game is started with 9 players and an injury occurs, you may play with 8 players and DO NOT get charged the out for the 9th (injured) player.
14. A manager must notify the opposing manager if a player will be sitting out of a game due to disciplinary reasons.
15. Each community is responsible for creating team/league parity and will be overseen by the Commission.

## **MANAGERS**

1. A game or practice will not take place without an adult present.
2. Teams wishing to take infield practice before a game should be at the field early so as not to delay the game. Games need to start ON TIME.
3. Visiting team will get the field 15 minutes prior to the start of the game for infield practice.
4. Any games not played for a lack of eligible players will be forfeited. Any team forfeiting three games will forfeit all remaining games.
5. Managers and/or coaches may coach the bases.
6. The home team manager must review the ground rules with the visiting team manager and the umpire prior to the start of the game. The chief umpire will decide any situations that are not discussed prior to the game.
7. All team coaches or a designated representative will attend a mandatory rules meeting sponsored by Racine County Girls Softball Program. A penalty of **\$50 per team** without a representative will be assessed the offending community in order to assure that all coaches attend this meeting.

## **PLAYING FIELD**

1. All league games must be played on a field that is acceptable to the home plate umpire.
2. Food or beverages will not be allowed on the playing field.
3. There will be no smoking or chewing tobacco on the playing field, bench or bench area. The offenders will be removed from the game or bench area.
4. Inappropriate language or obscene gestures will not be allowed on the playing field or bench area by anyone involved with the game from one hour before until after the game has ended. Offenders will have to leave the field area. If they refuse to leave, their team will forfeit the game. The League will then meet to review the matter and decide on season long termination.
5. Double base must be used at first base for Softball games.
6. Base lengths are 60' for **all** Leagues.

## **COACHES, PARENTS, FANS AND PLAYERS CODE OF CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS**

1. Everyone will conduct himself or herself in a manner that displays good sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
2. No one will use foul language at any time during a game or practice.
3. Everyone will be equally representative of good sportsmanship in winning and losing.
4. Everyone is prohibited from arguing an Umpire's decision and Coaches will ensure that players remain under control at all times.
5. Coaches will ensure that Umpires are aware of any unique league rules that apply.
6. Coaches will make sure that all players treat equipment and uniforms in the proper manner.
7. Coaches will know and follow all game rules that apply.
8. Do not take advantage of an unknowledgeable Coach by changing the rules.

9. **DO NOT** deliberately run up a score on opponents.
10. Coaches are encouraged to give all players a fair chance to participate in games.
11. **Consequences** are as follows: If any of the above conduct issues are broken warning will be issued. If it continues, the person who is given the warning will be asked to leave the field. If that person is asked to leave, then their child and any fans, which include family members, may also be expected to leave. There is absolutely **no** arguing about the Umpires decision. If you do not leave, the game will be halted and your team, no matter what the score is, will forfeit the game. The Commission asks that all Coaches talk to parents, fans and spouses regarding contacting the Commission. They should go to you, the Coach, first. You then can come to your Commission member and state the problem. If it can't be settled, then your Commission member will bring it to the Commission board. It is expected that a copy of these General Rules would be handed out to all players and their parents.
12. Coach behavior issues should be forwarded to a league commissioner for review. Each issue will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
13. It is an **expectation** that anything that can be construed as bullying, violence or disrespect at any level is reported and handled immediately. There will be zero tolerance for this type of behavior. We are all volunteers out to make this an enjoyable time in our lives and we all should be given the opportunity to enjoy it.

## ***THE GAME***

1. All games will consist of 7 innings and ties will be decided by extra innings. A game can end early if both teams agree. **The start time will be declared and noted by both the umpire and the coaches.**
2. In the event a game is stopped due to weather conditions. A **complete** game will consist of 4 innings, or 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead, or the game has lasted at least 90 minutes. If a **complete** game is not reached, the game should be resumed back to the last full inning completed.
3. Conferences with pitcher:
  - a. There shall be only one conference between the manager and/or team representative from the dugout with each pitcher in an inning. The second conference shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the inning.
  - b. There shall be only one team conference between the manager and/or team representative from the dugout per inning.
  - c. There shall be only one conference between the pitcher and a defensive player per inning.
4. At the beginning of each half inning, or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than five pitches shall be delivered as warm-up.
5. For the safety of all players: Base runners should attempt to slide if there is a play at a base. A fielder may not block the base or obstruct the base path unless they have possession of the ball. If there is obstruction by the fielder, the runner may be awarded one base. At the Umpire's discretion, a runner may be called out if no attempt is made to slide.

6. All on deck batters **MUST** warm up behind the existing batter.
7. Each girl must play at least two innings in the field. When the umpire notifies coaches that they are beginning the final inning, any players who have not yet entered the game defensively must be substituted in immediately, regardless of the number of innings that have been played.
8. **SPEED-UP RULE:** A courtesy runner may be allowed for the pitcher or catcher or an injured player. It shall be the last girl to make an out.
9. A game that is tied at the end of seven innings shall be continued into extra innings.
10. It is the Umpire's discretion as to whether a bat or helmet was thrown carelessly or deliberately. The first infraction is not an automatic out but the 2nd and subsequent occurrences would be an automatic out. If it was a careless act, a warning will be given to the Coach and the next violation is an ejection. If the infraction was deliberate, the player will be ejected and a substitute runner will enter if applicable. **There will be one warning issued per team. The 2nd occurrence will result in an out.**
11. The umpire will allow the base the runner is going to plus one extra base if the ball leaves the field of play. The ball is dead and players cannot advance when the Umpire calls time out.

### ***PINTO LEAGUE SPECIFIC RULES***

1. Games will be played on **Tuesdays** and **Fridays**. All home games will start at either 6:00 PM unless otherwise noted, with a 15-minute grace period. **NO NEW INNING SHALL START AFTER 1 hour 45 minutes from the start time. IF umpire declares last inning it must be declared to both head coaches.**
2. There will be a 5 run limit by either team in any inning except the last inning of the game. **A total of 5 runs may be scored in an inning, except that additional runs may score on continuation of the last play to a max of 8 runs. Unlimited runs allowed during last inning of play as determined by the umpire.**
3. If a team is ahead by **15 runs after 4 innings** the game will be considered completed and the score will be final. The losing coach has the option of continuing the game up to the time limit, but **may not come back and gain a victory**. If the "winning" coach refuses to continue the game they will forfeit their victory and the "losing" team will receive a forfeit win with a recorded score of 7-0.
4. There will be **no stealing** and no advancing on a dropped third strike.
5. No infield fly rule will be used.
6. There will be 10 players on the field, of which four will be stationed equally in the outfield.
7. All leagues will bat their **entire** roster and free defensive substitutions will be allowed.

8. Players cannot pitch more than **12** outs per game. All batters pitched to after a pitcher has reached her maximum number of outs will bat over if the opposing manager chooses to do so. Pitchers, once removed from the mound, may return to the mound only **once** during any game.
9. Bunting **is** allowed.
10. An 11" ball will be used for this league only.
11. The pitcher's plate should be 35 feet from the apex of home plate. Moving closer would increase the danger for the pitcher and the batter.
12. To limit running up the score and taking advantage of younger players, **no base runner may advance past the base they currently occupy, or are heading to if between bases**, once the ball is under control by any defensive player within the pitching circle or, at the umpires discretion, where the circle would be if one is not present.
13. When a ball hits the ground prior to hitting the batter while they are in the batter's box it will be considered a ball.
14. New in 2024 there will be no walks issued in Pinto League. Once 4 balls are pitched to a batter, a coach/parent from the team that is batting will finish that batter. If coach/parent is hit with a batted ball well in the field of play the ball will be played as a live ball.

### ***JUNIOR LEAGUE SPECIFIC RULES***

1. Games will be played on Wednesdays and Fridays. All home games will start at either 6:00 PM or 8:00 PM unless otherwise noted, with a 15-minute grace period. **NO NEW INNING SHALL START AFTER 1 hour 45 minutes from the start time. IF umpire declares last inning it must be declared to both head coaches.**
2. There will be a 7 run limit by either team in any inning except the last inning of the game. Last inning will be declared by the Umpire and agreed upon by both Coaches. **A total of 7 runs may be scored in an inning, except that additional runs may score on continuation of the last play to a max of 10 runs. Unlimited runs allowed during last inning of play as determined by the umpire.**
3. If a team is ahead by **15 runs after 5 innings** the game will be considered completed and the score will be final. The losing coach has the option of continuing the game up to the time limit, but **may not come back and gain a victory**. If the "winning" coach refuses to continue the game they will forfeit their victory and the "losing" team will receive a forfeit win with a recorded score of 7-0.
4. Stealing is allowed **after** the ball crosses the plate. The base runner will be called out if observed leaving early with the ball being dead and the pitch called a "no pitch".
5. Infield fly rule **will** be used.
6. All teams will bat their entire roster and free defensive substitutions will be allowed.

7. The fielding team shall consist of 9 players in the following positions: Pitcher, Catcher, First Base, Second Base, Shortstop, Third Base, Right Field, Center Field, and Left Field.
8. Players cannot pitch more than **12** outs per game. All batters pitched to after a pitcher has reached her maximum number of outs will bat over if the opposing manager chooses to do so. Pitchers, once removed from the mound, may return to the mound only **once** during any game.
9. The pitcher's plate should be 40 feet from the apex of home plate. Moving closer would increase the danger for the pitcher and the batter.
10. Bunting is allowed. An attempt must be made at the ball for a STRIKE to be called, unless the pitch is in the strike zone.
11. Once a batter commits to bunt, she must bunt and **cannot** pull the bat back and swing away. First violation will result in a strike called and a warning. Second offense the batter will be called out.
12. A 12" ball will be used for this league.
13. In the Junior League a dropped third strike will be played as a live ball.

### **SENIOR LEAGUE SPECIFIC RULES**

1. Games will be played on Sunday Nights. All home games will start at either 5:00 PM and/or 7:00 PM unless otherwise noted, with a 15-minute grace period. NO NEW INNING SHALL START AFTER 1 hour 40 minutes AND BOTH COACHES MUST BE NOTIFIED WHEN LAST INNING IS CALLED.
2. There will be a 7 run limit by either team in any inning except the last inning of the game. Last inning will be declared by the Umpire and agreed upon by both Coaches. **A total of 7 runs may be scored in an inning, except that additional runs may score on continuation of the last play to a max of 10 runs. The last inning of the game this limit does not apply.**
3. Stealing is allowed when the ball leaves the pitchers hand.
4. Infield fly rule will be used.
5. Teams will have the choice of batting their entire roster or batting only nine players. This decision must be made prior to the game and indicated on the lineup card. Once lineups are exchanged at the pre-game conference and approved by the home plate umpire this decision is final and may not be changed. The two teams may choose different options in the same game. In all cases free defensive substitution is allowed.
6. If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, all pitches must be legally delivered to the batter. A pitchout intended to walk a batter is not considered an illegal pitch.
7. If any team is ahead by **15 runs** after **5 innings**, the game is over.
8. The pitcher's plate should be 43 feet from the apex of home plate in accordance with NFHS and WIAA rules.
9. Bunting is allowed. An attempt must be made at the ball for a STRIKE to be called, unless the pitch is in the strike zone.
10. A 12" ball will be used for this league.

## **PITCHING**

*The RCGFA Pitching Guidelines are not intended to replace the NFHS pitching rules, but rather to highlight the more important aspects of the motion for young pitchers. Coaches are still expected to teach proper mechanics according to NFHS Rule 6, Pitching, so that the young pitcher is prepared for further competition, including high school and beyond. With only one umpire working most league games, it is impossible to accurately enforce minor infractions, so officials are expected to use their discretion and only enforce major violations that give the pitcher a clear advantage.*

1. Pitchers must take a position with the pivot foot on or partially on the top surface of the pitcher's plate and with the non-pivot foot **in contact** with or behind the pitcher's plate. Both feet must be within the 24-inch length of the plate.
2. Pitchers in the **Junior or Senior** leagues must present the ball prior to pitching. This entails pausing with the shoulders squared to home plate and the hands separated, simulating taking a signal from the catcher. The pitcher then shall bring her hands together in front of her body for not less than one and not more than ten seconds before releasing the ball. Pinto league pitchers are encouraged to learn to present the ball but will not be required to do so. In the Junior league, a warning will be issued for failing to present the ball.
3. The ball must be delivered with an underhand motion of not more than 1½ clockwise rotations from a position below the hip and with the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
4. The pitch is completed with a single step toward the batter.
5. The pivot foot may remain in contact with or may push off and drag away from the pitching plate prior to the front foot touching the ground as long as the foot remains in contact with the ground and within the 24-inch length. Pushing off with the pivot foot from any place other than the pitcher's plate, i.e. taking an extra step or "crow hop," is illegal. If the pivot foot breaks contact with the ground slightly, this will not be called an illegal pitch unless, at the umpire's discretion, the infraction is so excessive and obvious that it gives the pitcher a considerable advantage.

## **SCORES AND WEATHER**

1. Both teams are responsible for finalizing the score in the Game Changer app within 24 hours.
2. The RCGFA will use the Game Changer app for standings and other league news. Coaches are responsible for making certain that all of their games have been correctly recorded in the app. All questions as to the accuracy of the app should be directed through the local commissioners.
3. Weather conditions will be updated daily on the app and social media, but please check directly with your local commissioner first. The message will be updated by 4:30 on game days and it is the responsibility of each community Commissioner to report rainouts or weather delays. After 4:30 the decision is left in the hands of the home plate umpire who will take field conditions and player safety into consideration when making his or her decision.

4. All rainouts MUST be rescheduled by the two coaches within 7 days and played within 14 days. If coaches do not respond to requests to make up a game, the issue will be escalated to league commissioners. Commissioners will assign make-up game date, award a forfeit, or call the game a scratch for both teams.
5. Game cancellations other than for weather require a MANDATORY 48-hour notice to the opposing coach. Also, both coaches must notify their commissioners. Normal rescheduling rules apply. **Coaches are encouraged to call up younger players in order to play all games as scheduled.** Failure to supply adequate notice may result in a forfeit at the commission's discretion.
6. Rescheduled games may be played on non-game nights, weekends, at neutral sites or at the visiting team's diamonds with the scheduled team considered home in order to fit all games in due to limited field availability.

Last inning explanation.

Last inning does not need to be announced prior to the start. However if the umpire does announce it both head coaches must be notified.

The last inning does not need to be determined prior to the start of the inning. However no new inning should start after the time limit. If within 15 minutes of the time limit the away team scores the inning limit of runs a discussion should be had between the Head Coaches and the umpires to determine if this will indeed be the last inning or if there is to complete an additional inning. If it is determined to be last inning the away team continues to bat until there is 3 outs. Then the home team will bat there last

If the away team scores less than the inning limit and the game reaches the time limit the game is over.