
HONG KONG CHINA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

LOCAL GROUND RULES

2026 – 2027

The Rules and Regulations governing the competition shall be the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Fast Pitch Softball Playing Rules (FPPR) 2026 - 2029, and subject to the Local Ground Rules of Hong Kong China Softball Association where otherwise expressly stated or provided. The Hong Kong China Softball Association, subject to prior notice, reserves the right to make alterations and amendments to any of the rules mentioned below.

1 Player Eligibility

- 1.1 All players must be current registered members of Hong Kong China Softball Association. Male teams' rosters shall include only male players and female teams' rosters shall include only female players.
- 1.2 A team must have a minimum of fifteen (15) and a maximum of twenty-five (25) eligible players on the roster. If a team requests to register more than twenty-five (25) players, prior approval shall be obtained from the Competition Management Committee.
- 1.3 The minimum age of any registered player eligible to participate in MC, MD, WB, WC divisions or associated activity shall be twelve (12) years by date of registration.
- 1.4 Youth players aged 12-13 are not allowed to be registered in MS, MA, MB and WA divisions, unless with the prior approval from the Competition Management Committee.
- 1.5 A player shall only play for **one** team and in **one** division, to which he/she is registered to.
- 1.6 A player is not allowed to change his/her team in a league season unless with the prior approval from the Competition Management Committee.
- 1.7 Ineligible player(s) found to play for another team(s) (irrespective of whether he/she uses a false name) shall be suspended from the remainder of the season, with potential additional suspensions for the offending team for future seasons and other leagues. The suspension will be decided by the Competition Management Committee after consultation with the Executive Council.
- 1.8 Violation of the rules on the eligibility of players shall result in the relevant game being forfeited.
- 1.9 Any new player of a team must be registered at least 3 working days (72 hours) before he/she shall be eligible to play a game for that team.
- 1.10 Any new team must be registered in the lowest division (MD or WC Division). The Competition Management Committee retains sole authority to determine the admission of a new team, including the criteria used for division classification and skill evaluation.

2 Game Fixture

- 2.1 All scheduled games must start on time with no delays allowed. Both teams must have a sufficient number of uniformed players on the field when the game starts. A team is considered as not having insufficient players to start when:
 - a) Less than 9 players are present in the lineup.
 - b) When they are using FLEX/DP, one of the non-FLEX/DP player is not present, and less than 10 players are present in the lineup.
- 2.2 No requests for the unavailability, postponement, or rescheduling of games shall be considered without prior approval from the Competition Management Committee. EXCEPTION: A head coach or manager may submit a written request for a rescheduled game if five (5) or more players on the roster are concurrently registered in another HKCSA-sanctioned tournament, and the start time between the scheduled league game and the other game is less than 3 hours, by sending a written request to the Hong Kong China Softball Association within 3 working days (72 hours) after the schedule email has been sent. No rescheduling will be granted after the given period.
- 2.3 A team insisting on postponement of a game may contact the team managers concerned to switch the games on their own. Official confirmation letter or notice from all the related team managers should be sent to the Hong Kong China Softball Association at least 3 working days (72 hours) before the scheduled game day. The Competition Management Committee has the sole discretion to approve or reject a formal notice of postponement or re-scheduling of games without giving reasons for the decision.
- 2.4 If the team requests a postponement and cannot arrange another team to swap schedule slots, it may apply to the Association for a forfeit without penalty. An official request must be submitted to the Hong Kong China Softball Association at least 3 working days (72 hours) prior to the scheduled game. Upon approval, the opposing team will be officially notified by the Association and is not required to appear at game time. If a team fails to meet this 3-working-day requirement and neither team appears, a double walkover will be assessed to both teams. Each team is permitted only one forfeit without penalty per season; any subsequent request will be denied and ruled as a "walkover".

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- 2.5 If a team does not have enough players on the field to start the game (as required in section 2.1), the opposite team will be awarded a "walkover". Each "walkover" will result in a fine of **HK\$1000**, which will be deducted from the offending team's deposit. This penalty applies to all scheduled games in Open League and Festival of Sports (if applicable).
- 2.6 Any team that forfeits a total of two matches by "walkover" shall be automatically ejected from its league and all associated competitions (including the Festival of Sports and other related matches, if applicable) for the remainder of the season. All players registered to an ejected team shall be barred from transferring to any other team or division for the remainder of the season, unless explicitly approved by the Competition Management Committee.
- An ejected team will automatically be placed last in the standings for the current round and placed last in the lowest group for all subsequent rounds. Consequently, ejected teams face automatic relegation for the following season, subject to retention approval by the Competition Management Committee.
- For priority purposes, the terms "first ejected team," "second ejected team," "third ejected team," and so on, are defined strictly by the date on which each team incurs its second walkover.
- Standard relegation applies to the first two ejected teams. For any additional ejected teams (3rd, 4th, 5th, etc.), each team will also be relegated provided that the corresponding lower-ranked team from the lower division (e.g., 3rd, 4th, or 5th-ranked team) accepts promotion. An additional ejected team will avoid relegation only if the corresponding lower-division team declines promotion.
- The Competition Management Committee reserves the sole right to determine whether an ejected team may re-register for the following season.
- 2.7 If a team does not have sufficient players to continue the game, in the case of player's injury or unfitness, it is considered as a forfeited game but not as a "walkover". No deposit will be deducted, and the final game result and standings statistics shall be determined strictly in accordance with the Mid-Game Withdrawal rules outlined in Appendix I 3. d.
- 2.8 If two teams give a "doubled-walkover" in a double-elimination playoff series, both teams cannot advance to the loser bracket, and the game verdict for both teams shall follow Rule 2.9.
- 2.9 In the event of a forfeit or walkover, the offending team shall be recorded as having conceded the game by a score of 7-0 in favor of the non-offending team. For the official league standings, run differential, and Team's Quality Balance (TQB) calculations, the standings statistics and disciplinary penalties shall be assigned strictly in accordance with Appendix I. All other cases of a forfeited game shall also follow this rule.
- 2.10 Most games will be scheduled to play on Saturday, Sunday and Public Holiday. On urgent necessity, games will be scheduled on weekday evenings. Day or week double-headers will be scheduled for making-up rainout games.
- 2.11 Basically, without any adverse ground conditions, MS, MA, MB and WA divisions will be scheduled to play at Tin Kwong Road softball field; MC divisions will be scheduled to play at both Tin Kwong Road and/or Shek Kip Mei softball fields; MD, WB and WC divisions will be scheduled to play at Shek Kip Mei softball fields.

3 Home & Away team

- 3.1 The choice of Home or Away team shall be decided by coin-toss before the game. If double round robin is adopted for the league division, the Home or Away team shall be assigned alternatively. If triple round robin is adopted for the league division, the Home or Away team shall be assigned alternatively for the first two rounds and the Home or Away team shall be decided by coin-toss for the third round.
- 3.2 The Home team takes the field ahead of the Away team.
- 3.3 No infield practice is allowed before the game.

4 Home run and passed ball ground rules

- 4.1 Tin Kwong Road Softball Ground:
- 4.1.1 A home run will be awarded if a batted fair fly ball clears over the home run line attached onto the soft net at outfield.
- 4.1.2 If a fair batted ball hits the home run line or middle soft net fencing at the outfield, the ball is dead, and the batter is awarded two bases. The base runners shall be awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.
- 4.1.3 If a fair batted ball hits on or below the blue protective padding of the outfield fence, the ball is in play.
- 4.1.4 If a pitched ball (whether it is touched or untouched by a catcher or umpire) hits the backstop soft net fencing, the ball is dead, and the base runners are entitled to one base without liability to be put out.

- 4.1.5 When a ball is in play and is overthrown (whether it is touched or untouched by a fielder or umpire) to soft net fencing /dugout, the ball is dead. The batter-runner and all other runners shall be awarded two bases from the time the ball left the fielder's hand.
- 4.2 Shek Kip Mei Softball Ground (Pitch #3):
- 4.2.1 A home run will be given to the batter if a batted fair fly ball first lands beyond the outfield boundary governed by the position of cones. It is a home run if the batted ball hits the cones before touching the ground.
- 4.2.2 If a fair-batted ball (whether it is touched or untouched by a fielder or umpire) bounces or passes through the outfield boundary governed by the position of cones, the ball is dead. The batter-runner and runners shall be awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.
- 4.2.3 When the ball is thrown and leaves the playing field, or the outfield boundary governed by the position of cones, the batter-runner and runners shall be awarded two bases from the time the ball leaves the fielder's hand.
- 4.3 Shek Kip Mei Softball Ground (Pitch #4): (near the changing room)
- 4.3.1 A home run will be given to the batter if a batted fair fly ball clears over the fence at right field, or first hits on the concrete wall at left and center fields, a home run shall be awarded to the batter.
- 4.3.2 If a fair-batted ball (whether it is touched or untouched by a fielder or umpire) enters the concrete jogging pavement at the outfield, the ball is dead. The batter-runner and runners shall be awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.
- 4.3.3 When the ball is thrown and leaves the playing field or enters the concrete jogging pavement at the outfield, the batter-runner and runners shall be awarded two bases from the time the ball leaves the fielder's hand.

5 The game

- 5.1 A regulation game shall consist of seven innings or in accordance with the time limit, whichever comes first.
- 5.2 Time limit for each division is:

	Division	Time Limit	
1	MS	1 hr. 40 min.	100 min.
2	MA	1 hr. 40 min.	100 min.
3	MB	1 hr. 40 min.	100 min.
4	MC	1 hr. 30 min.	90 min.
5	MD	1 hr. 30 min.	90 min.
6	WA	1 hr. 40 min.	100 min.
7	WB	1 hr. 30 min.	90 min.
8	WC	1 hr. 30 min.	90 min.

If the start time of the scheduled game is postponed by the previous game, it will be started at least 15min after the previous game ends. Actual game start time will be determined and announced by the plate umpire of the delayed game.

The last game in TKR will not be started if the second last game still hasn't been completed at 20:45. However, both teams have to show up with sufficient players when the plate umpire on duty calls the lineup right after the delayed second last game ends. Failure of this results in a "walkover" of the game.

5.3 MS, MA, MB, WA Divisions

- 5.3.1 No extra inning shall be started after the game has been played up to the time limit, except for a tied game.
- 5.3.2 The exact time recorded for the completion of an inning is the moment when the umpire called for the third out. In other words, an inning starts when the final out of the preceding inning is made.
- 5.3.3 A regulation game shall be called after the completion of the top half of the inning when the game has been played up to the time limit and if when the home team is

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- leading. The turn of the batter (time at bat) in progress will stop unless the pitcher has started the pitch.
(When the pitcher becomes stationary on the pitcher's plate while two hands together in front of the body, this is considered the start of the pitch.)
The game will be called when all plays are settled. All advances, runs and outs count during the play.
- 5.3.4 If a game is in a draw or if the away team is leading when the game has been played up to the time limit, the game shall continue until the completion of the inning, or until the home team scores more runs than the away team in the bottom half of the inning.
- 5.3.5 A tiebreaker system shall be executed if the game is tied with a complete inning after reaching the time limit in round robin and knockout games.
- 5.4 MC, MD, WB, WC Divisions
- 5.4.1 No extra inning shall be started after the game has been played up to the time limit, except for a tied game.
- 5.4.2 The exact time recorded for the completion of an inning is the moment when the umpire called for the third out or situations ending the inning as prescribed in 6.4. In other words, an inning starts when the final out, inning-ending walk, tagging the home plate or a dead ball situation of the preceding inning is made.
- 5.4.3 A regulation game shall be called after the completion of the top half of the inning when the game has been played up to the time limit and if when the home team is leading. The turn of the batter (time at bat) in progress will stop unless the pitcher has started the pitch.
(When the pitcher becomes stationary on the pitcher's plate while two hands together in front of the body, this is considered the start of the pitch.)
The game will be called when all plays are settled. All advances, runs and outs count during the play.
- 5.4.4 A regulation game shall be called if one team leads the other by
- 10 runs or more; or
 - 9 runs and the leading team makes 1 out; or
 - 8 runs and the leading team makes 2 outs
- when the game has been played up to the time limit. The turn of the batter (time at bat) in progress will stop unless the pitcher has started the pitch.
- 5.4.5 If a game is in a draw or if the away team is leading when the game has been played up to the time limit, the game shall continue until the completion of the inning, or until the home team scores more runs than the away team in the bottom half of the inning.
- 5.4.6 A tiebreaker system shall be executed if the game is tied with a complete inning after reaching the time limit in round robin and knockout games.
- 5.5 Run ahead rule
- 5.5.1 Run ahead rule shall be adopted at all Preliminary Round Robins and Playoffs Series in all divisions.
- 5.5.2 The run ahead rule for ALL divisions is when one team leads another by: fifteen (15) runs after three (3) innings; ten (10) runs after four (4) innings; or seven (7) runs after five (5) innings.
- 5.6 Tiebreaker
- 5.6.1 For all divisions, the offensive team must place a base-runner on the second base who is scheduled to bat ninth in that respective half-inning and play until the score is decided one way or the other.
- 5.6.2 The player(s) who is/are positioned as a runner/runners in tiebreaker can be substituted in accordance with the substitution rules.
- 5.7 Ranking System
- The ranking of the teams is based on the result of the games played in the round robin(s) or playoff round separately.
The ranking of the teams is determined in order by the following procedures until the tie is broken: Winning Percentage; Head-to-head; Team's Quality Balance (TQB); Runs Against; Runners Left on Base (LOB) and Coin Toss/Drawing.
- 5.7.1 The team with the higher winning percentage ranks on top of the others.
- 5.7.2 When two (2) or more teams are tied in the overall winning percentage, the following ranking system shall be used to break the tie in order until the tie is broken (Example Cases. Please refer to Appendix I):
- i. **Head-to-Head:** The team with the higher winning percentage in the games played exclusively between the tied teams shall be placed ahead of the others.

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- ii. **Team's Quality Balance (TQB):** If teams remain tied, they shall be ranked by their total TQB recorded in the games played between the tied teams. The team with the highest TQB is placed ahead of the others. (Example Cases. Please refer to Appendix I.)
 - iii. **Run Differential:** If teams remain tied, they shall be ranked by their total run differential in the games played between the tied teams. The team with the highest run differential is placed ahead of the others.
 - iv. **Runners Left on Base (LOB):** If teams remain tied, they shall be ranked by the total number of runners left on base (LOB) recorded in the games played between the tied teams. The team with the highest total LOB is placed ahead of the others.
 - v. **A Coin Toss:** If the tied teams remain tied after all previous criteria, their final rankings shall be decided by a coin toss or drawing of lots in the presence of the tied team managers.
- 5.8 Signing the Score Sheet
- 5.8.1 Both team managers are requested to sign the score sheet after the game to verify the score.
 - 5.8.2 Team members and managers are strictly prohibited from taking photos of the score sheet at the field. Any team requiring a copy of the official score sheet must submit an application to the Hong Kong China Softball Association.
 - 5.8.3 The application must be submitted within 8 weeks starting from the day following the game. An administrative fee of HK\$100 will be charged per copy per game.
 - 5.8.4 Upon receipt of the application and payment, the requested electronic score sheet copy will normally be issued during the 4th to 6th week after the game day.
- 5.9 Batting position
- 5.9.1 To speed up the game, a strike shall be called if the batter does not take his/her position in the batter's box within 10 seconds after the umpire has declared "Play Ball".
 - 5.9.2 The batter must keep at least one foot in the box between pitches, unless for the exceptions apply in which case the batter may leave the batter's box. If not, the umpire issues a strike.
(Refer to WBSC Softball Rules 2026 - 2029 Rule 5.4.2 e for exceptions)
- 5.10 Relegation and Promotion system
- 5.10.1 The right to be promoted to the upper division will be first granted to the teams with the promotion rights according to the Playing Format.
 - 5.10.2 If there is any vacancy available or the qualified team for promotion abandons its right to promote: the priority of promotion (or remain in same division) will be given in the following order:
 - i. The highest-ranking team in the lower division (except the team qualified to be promoted);
 - ii. The team ranked second last in that division (Not applicable to MS);
 - iii. The team ranked last in that division;
 - iv. The team in the lower division (base on the league ranking, except the team promoted or relegated);
 - v. The local team invited by the Association
 - 5.10.3 Competition Management Committee reserves the right of final decision on any promotion and relegation of the league.

6 9th-batter Rules (For MC, MD, WB, WC divisions)

- 6.1 9th-batter rules are to be used in MC, MD, WB and WC divisions. Only a maximum of nine (9) batters from an offensive team shall have their turns at bat in an inning.
- 6.2 The defensive team cannot issue an intentional base on balls (walk) to the 9th-batter without delivering pitches.
- 6.3 When it is less than three (3) outs, and the 9th-batter becomes the batter runner or there is/are runner(s) on base after the 9th-batter is out, the ball is live. The defense may elect to put out the batter runner or runner(s), or return the live ball and tagging the home plate to end the inning.
- 6.4 a) The ball is dead when the 9th-batter does any of the following:
 - i. is awarded a base on balls;
 - ii. is hit by a pitched ball;
 - iii. hits a fair batted ball that passes out of the playing field (ground rule double); or
 - iv. strikes out on a dropped third strike that enters dead ball territory.All runners and the batter runner are awarded two (2) bases at the time of pitch. The inning ends when the ball is dead.

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- b) A delayed dead ball shall be signaled when the 9th-batter:
- is obstructed from striking at a pitched ball; or
 - hits the illegal pitch:
- The ball remains live until all play resulting from the pitch is completed. If the batter and all other runners advance at least two bases on the play, the obstruction/illegal pitch is nullified and all actions as a result of the play stand and no option is given. The inning ends when the entire play is completed. If not, the umpire will declare a dead ball, thereby ending the inning. The offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or all runners and the batter runner being awarded two (2) bases at the time of pitch.
- c) A delayed dead ball shall be signaled when the pitcher delivered an illegal pitch to the 9th batter when there is three balls on the 9th batter. The umpire will declare a dead ball if the illegal pitch is not hit. The batter and all runners will be awarded two (2) bases at the time of pitch. The inning ends when the ball is dead.
- d) A delayed dead ball shall be signaled when in a third strike situation, the 9th-batter swings at but does not hit the illegal pitch and it is a dropped third strike but the catcher throws the batter out at first base, and other base runners advance at least two bases, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of play or all runners and the batter runner being awarded two (2) bases at the time of pitch.: The ball remains live until all play resulting from the pitch is completed. If the batter-runner reaches second base as a result of the dropped third strike and if all other base runners advance at least two bases, the illegal pitch is nullified, all action as a result of the play stands and no option is given. The inning ends when the entire play is completed.
- e) After the 9th-batter completed his/her turn at bat, there is an out on the offense team while causing the ball to be dead, for example: interference, illegal batting, touching batted ball, or hit by batted ball, etc., the inning ends when the ball is dead.
- f) After the 9th-batter completes his/her turn at bat, if a thrown ball enters a dead-ball area, the ball is dead immediately and the inning ends. Base awards under sections 4.1.5, 4.2.3, or 4.3.3 are then applied.
- 6.5 After the inning is ended as described in the previous sections 6.3 and 6.4, the defense may appeal for extra out(s) and nullify run(s).

Note: Unless the appeal is regarding the third out, and it is a force out or causing the succeeding runners cannot score, the appeal will NOT affect the advances or runs by the other runners or the batter runner in 6.4 a), b), or c).

7 Line-up

- 7.1 A player's name shall not be on the starting line-up, unless that player is present in the team area and uniformed.
- 7.2 Eligible roster members may be added to the substitute list at any time during the game.
- 7.3 The line-up sheets should be submitted to the official scorer for at least 30 minutes before the game, and both teams should exchange their teams' line-up rosters. The team manager or coach should obtain the line-up sheet from the scorer proactively. If the teams play the first scheduled game on the day, they can obtain the line-up sheets from the scorer 45 minutes before their game starts. The teams can also obtain the line-up sheets from the duty officer at SKM or Association Staff by visiting the office after 9:30am on Sunday or 1:30pm on Saturday.
- 7.3.1 The Hong Kong Observatory standard time will be followed if an official clock is not provided in the field.
- 7.4 To allow scorer to check identities of the players with respect to the registered record:
- 7.4.1 Tin Kwong Road Softball Ground:
Both teams shall assemble near the scorer promptly upon submission of lineup sheets to facilitate player identity checks.
- 7.4.2 Shek Kip Mei Softball Ground:
Both teams shall assemble at home plate five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled game time.
- 7.5 If a team fails to comply with Rule 7.3 or 7.4, the official scorer will record the incident(s) on the score sheet and a penalty will be imposed to the concerned team. (Details of the penalty please refer to Appendix II.)

If a team submits the lineup card less than 10 minutes before the scheduled game start time, the team manager/ head coach who signs the lineup card/ the listed first team manager will receive an official warning. Successive late submission of lineup will result in suspension of the manager/ head coach.

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- 7.6 Any change or substitution requested by the manager after submitting the line-up sheet to the scorer must be changed in accordance with the substitution rules. The line-up card is treated as finalized in the pre-game meeting in WBSC FPPR when it is submitted to the official scorer.
 - 7.7 Full names, dress numbers and positions of the players should be clearly printed on the line-up sheet.
 - 7.8 The name of the manager/coach should also be written and signed on the line-up sheet.
 - 7.9 The identities of the players shall be checked by the scorer with respect to the registered record before the game.

8 Ground Condition

- 8.1 The umpire is empowered to suspend or call a game at any time including but not limited to darkness, adverse weather or venue condition (e.g. ground condition, opening hours of venue etc.).
- 8.2 Suspended Game (Example Cases. Please refer to Appendix III):
 - 8.2.1 If a game is suspended prior to completing THREE (3) full innings in the MS, MA, and WA divisions, or TWO (2) full innings in the MB, MC, MD, WB, and WC divisions—and the visiting team is leading or the score is tied—the game shall be replayed from the beginning with flexible lineups.
 - 8.2.2 A regulation game shall be declared if a suspended game has been played for THREE (3) or more complete innings in the MS, MA and WA divisions, or TWO (2) or more complete innings in the MB, MC, MD, WB and WC divisions. The score of a called regulation game is the score at the end of the last complete inning, unless the home team has scored more runs than the visiting team in the bottom half of the incomplete inning, in which case the score at the time of suspension shall stand.
 - 8.2.3 A regulation game shall be declared if a game is suspended after the home team scores more runs than the visiting team in the bottom half of an incomplete third (3rd) inning in the MS, MA, and WA divisions, or in the bottom half of an incomplete second (2nd) inning in the MB, MC, MD, WB, and WC divisions.
 - 8.2.4 If a suspended game is tied at the end of the last complete inning after reaching the required number of completed innings stated in 8.2.2, the game shall be rescheduled for a later date and continued to play at the beginning of next inning.
 - 8.2.5 If the game has been played for the number of completed innings as stated in 8.2.2, and the home team tied the scores in the bottom half of the incomplete inning when it is suspended, the game shall be rescheduled for a later date and continued to play at the exact point where it is suspended.
 - 8.2.6 For all continued games, original line-ups (including starting players, substitutes) shall not be changed. An eligible roster player may be added to the substitute list at the beginning or during the continued game. Substitution can be made in accordance with the substitution rules at the beginning or during the continued game. It is not a must for the player originally in the lineup and being substituted to show up in the continued game. A tiebreaker system shall be played for the continued game for any new extended inning.

9 Equipment and Uniform

- 9.1 Ball caps must be worn by all male players in the game.
- 9.2 Exception:
 - 9.2.1 An offensive player is not required to wear a cap when wearing an approved batting helmet, or
 - 9.2.2 When the defensive catcher is wearing an approved catcher mask or helmet.
- 9.3 Caps, visors and headbands are optional for female players. Plastic or hard visors are not allowed.
- 9.4 No exposed items, including jewelry or uniform adornments, judged by the umpire to be distracting or dangerous to opposing players, may be worn or displayed.
- 9.5 The uniform shirts of a team should be alike and numbers of contrasting colour be worn on the back. No players of the same team may wear identical numbers. (number 1 and 01 are examples of identical numbers.) Only whole numbers 01 to 99 shall be used. Players without numbers will not be permitted to play. Any exposed metal may not be attached onto the uniform.
- 9.6 Approved batting helmets are mandatory while batting and base running.
- 9.7 Helmet, mask and protectors should be worn by the catcher.
- 9.8 Only Softball bats on WBSC Softball Bat List and Approved Official Softball will be allowed. (Please refer to <https://www.wbso.org/en/organisation/softball/bat-list> for the updated Softball Bat List)

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- 9.9 Youth players aged 12-13 at the league enrollment deadline day who are registered in the league are compulsory to wear a face mask in the whole league season when taking infield defensive positions. Failure to do so shall be an ejection of the player from the game.
- 9.10 Youth players aged 12-13 at the league enrollment deadline day who are registered in the league are compulsory to wear a youth batting helmet in the whole league season when batting. Failure to do so shall be an ejection of the player from the game.

10 Appeal and Protest

- 10.1 Official umpires and scorers shall be assigned for all games. Decisions involving an umpire's judgment are final and not subject to appeal. If a game is played under protest, notice must immediately be given to the plate umpire, the official scorer, the technical commissioner or duty officer (if present), and the opposing team.
- 10.2 Protests shall only be considered concerning matters of the following cases:
- 10.2.1 Misinterpretation of a playing rule;
 - 10.2.2 Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule to a given situation;
 - 10.2.3 Failure to impose the correct effect for a given violation.
- 10.3 An official written protest letter (or protest form) must be submitted to the Hong Kong China Softball Association by hard copy or email within 48 hours after the protested game. If submitted by email, the protesting party must ensure they receive a written confirmation of receipt from the association. Additionally, a deposit of HK\$500 must be delivered by hand to the association within the same 48-hour period. The deposit will be refunded if the protest is sustained.
- 10.4 When a protest is allowed for misinterpretation of a playing rule, the game is replayed from the exact point at which the incorrect decision was made, with the decision corrected. Original line-ups (including starting players, substitutes, coaches) shall not be changed in the replayed game. An eligible roster player may be added to the substitute list at the beginning or during the continued game. Substitution can be made in accordance with the substitution rules at the beginning or during the continued game.
- 10.5 When a protest for ineligibility of a team roster member is allowed, the offending team shall forfeit the game.

11 Team behaviour

- 11.1 Any team member disputing any judgment decision by an umpire will constitute a team warning. Any repeat offense shall result in the ejection of that team member.
- 11.2 Any team member must not speak or act in an un-sportsman like manner, in umpire's judgment, to the officials, spectators and the opposing team. Should such bad behaviour continue despite ANY Umpire's warning, the offending team member is to be ejected out of the team area.
- 11.3 If a batter carelessly throws the bat while striking at a pitched ball (excluding a catcher obstruction), in umpire's judgement, in a way that may potentially or actually hit the catcher, plate umpire, or other participants, will be considered as an unsportsmanlike action. The ball is live if the action does not interfere with the play. After all plays are settled, the offense team will be issued with a team warning.
- 11.4 For subsequent offenses by the team with team warning in 11.3, the batter will be EJECTED from the game.
- 11.5 All ejected team members, except those ejected by in 11.4, will be subjected to at least one (1) game suspension within/across seasons.
The number of games suspended will be determined by the **Arbitration and Disciplinary Committee** according to WBSC tournament regulations and disciplinary regulations, see Appendix IV for reference.
After the decision is made, the team manager of the ejected player can make an official appeal to the Hong Kong China Softball Association within 48 hours. A \$500 appeal fee will be applied.
An independent committee, including a council member not in the **Arbitration and Disciplinary Committee**, umpire director and scoring director, will review the case. The appeal fee will be refunded if the appeal was successful.
- 11.6 The area directly behind the backstop net (see Appendix V) is designated as a restricted area. Team members are prohibited from congregating or remaining in this area. For repeated offense, team warning shall be given. Any team member from the warned team shall be ejected from the game in the third occurrences.

12 Players' obligation

- 12.1 All players should maintain the tidiness of the field and dugouts.
- 12.2 In order to keep the ground in good condition, team members are requested to rake the infield area after the game.

13 Scoring

- 13.1 According to GR 5.3.3, 5.4.3 and 5.4.4, the batter's plate appearance (PA) shall not be counted if the turn of batter is stopped when the game has been played up to the time limit.
- 13.2 The title of batting champion shall be awarded to the eligible player having the highest batting average in the preliminary round robin of the same league. If there is more than one player having the same batting average, the title will be awarded in accordance with the rankings of most hits; most home runs; most runs-batted-in (RBI).
- 13.3 Only the game statistics in preliminary round robin will be used for calculating the Batting Champion.

14 Awards

- 14.1 A title of Most Valuable Player (MVP) shall be awarded to one of the players in the Champion Team of each division. The Most Valuable Player (MVP) in each division shall be nominated by the team manager of the Champion team.
- 14.2 Batting Champion – the highest batting average recorded in the preliminary round (minimum PA should be at least 70% of the maximum PA recorded in the same preliminary round robin games).
- 14.3 Awards will be given to the players in MS and WA divisions with most Home Runs and most Runs-batted-in (RBI) recorded in the preliminary round.

15 League games recording

- 15.1 Hong Kong China Softball Association may take photos or videos before, during or after league games for publications or promotions related purposes. Should you have any queries, please contact the office.

【END】

Competition Management Committee