

# 2010 JTAA (Jupiter) Fall Classic Fastpitch Rules

## *Softball Tournament Rules and Guidelines - UPDATED 09.16.10*

### **PLAY BALL!**

Gates open at 8:00 AM. All games will be played at Jupiter Community Park (JCP). Directions listed at end of document.

Thank you for participating in JTAA's Jupiter Fall Classic Travel Tournament, which starts Sunday, September 26th and ends November 20<sup>th</sup> and 21st with a double elimination format tournament. Unless otherwise stated below or posted at the park, all games will be played under USSSA Florida Girls Softball rules. Rules listed in this document *and/or* posted at the park supersede the USSSA Florida Girls Softball rules.

Weather permitting, every team will play 8 seeding games - 2 games per Sunday. Forfeits count as a game and will be recorded as a 7-0 victory for the winner. Games are scheduled to be played at JCP. It is our intent to prepare players and teams for the 2011 Summer Travel Girls' Fastpitch Softball season.

The mission of this tournament is to provide an exciting, rewarding, and instructional experience for everyone. The seeding games prior to the November 20-21 Championship Games, are a perfect opportunity to give players the chance to learn the fundamentals of a second or third position, including pitching and catching.

No more than TWO players on a team may be league-age eligible for a higher age group in the 2011 season. Except in the 8U division, neither of those players may take the field as a pitcher or catcher. The Tournament Director reserves the right to make exceptions.

### **RULES AND GUIDELINES**

The Tournament Director reserves the right to change or append these rules at any time in the best interest of the players and the game of girls' fastpitch softball. The Tournament Director also reserves the right to change the schedule and realign the divisions in the best interest of fair, competitive play.

Abusive language or behavior will not be tolerated and violators are subject to removal from premises. **PLEASE, NO VUVUZELAS AT THE PARK!**

Please advise fans and players not to leave valuables in their cars. Articles left in vehicles are the sole responsibility of the owner. Report any suspicious behavior immediately to a Town of Jupiter or JTAA official.

Coolers are permitted, however, we are very proud of our concession stand and will have additional food and beverage vendors.

The consumption of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in the park or surrounding areas.

Public restroom facilities are provided **AND HAVE BEEN NEWLY RENOVATED IN THE SUMMER OF 2010!!**. DO NOT WRITE ON BATHROOM WALLS! VIOLATORS WILL BE SUSPENDED FROM THE TOURNAMENT.

No animals permitted on the premises.

Please advise players and fans to properly dispose of all garbage. Managers and coaches, please ensure that dugouts are cleaned out after each game. **DO NOT WRITE ON DUGOUT WALLS! VIOLATORS WILL BE SUSPENDED FROM THE TOURNAMENT.**

All teams must have paid tournament registrations (payable to JTAA) prior to playing.

***Play hard. Play fair. Have fun.***

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All teams must have a roster with players' names and birthdates. The roster must be signed by both players and parents. Teams must present a valid roster and proof of insurance. Teams must have proof of age available for each player.

All teams must check-in before their first game, providing all requested documentation.

All teams agree to play this tournament in the spirit for which it was intended - to develop players for next summer's travel season.

**Teams must be ready to play 30 minutes before their scheduled game time.** Game time is forfeit time. The Tournament Director has final word on all forfeits. Please be aware that some teams are playing double-headers and may need time to relocate to another field.

It is the responsibility of the team manager to check game times and field assignments.

Final seeding will be determined by **Win/Loss/Tie** record: Win=2 points, Loss=0 points, Tie=1 point.

Ties in final point standings will be broken in the following order.

- Head-to-Head competition (not used in multiple way ties)
- Runs Allowed
- Runs Scored
- Coin Flip

The score of a forfeited game will be 7-0 to the winning team.

With the exception of whiffle balls, there will be NO live hitting or throwing into fences.

**NO PRE-GAME WARM-UPS ARE TO BE CONDUCTED ON THE INFIELD!**

### **Time Limits**

No new inning will start after 1 hour 10 minutes. Innings in progress after the time limit has expired will be completed. If the result of the game cannot change by playing the inning (i.e. the home team is batting and has the lead) the game will end. An inning is considered complete after the third out is made. Seeding games can end in a tie. In 2-day tournament and championship games, ties will be played out using the international tie breaker.

Rain - if you finish 3 innings (2 1/2 if you are the home team and leading), and the game is stopped by rain, the game is complete. Any game started and not going that distance will be suspended and resumed from that point. If an inning is rained out before completion and the visitors have taken the lead in that inning without the home team batting you go back to the last completed inning.

In the event of rain delays, the Tournament Director reserves the right to reduce the time limits of all remaining games for that day. Every effort will be made to complete every scheduled game at the 1 hour 10 minute time limit. The Director reserves the right to change the format of the tournament to reach a conclusion and determine a champion.

### **Tie Games (2-day tournament and championship games only)**

If a game is tied after completion of the inning after time has expired, the international tiebreaker will be used. This would involve the last batter of the previous inning, whose turn at bat had been completed, assuming a position on second base with no outs and a new inning started. This would be done at the beginning of each half inning, until, at the conclusion of a full inning, a winner is determined.

A game that is tied at the end of the time limit must complete the full inning, if the time elapses during any part of an inning.

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### **Mercy Rule (except for the 10U "B" and 8u age groups)**

The mercy rule is 12, 10 and 8 runs in all games. If one team is 12, 10, or 8 runs ahead after 3, 4, or 5 innings the game will be called. Or if the home team is ahead by 12, 10 or 8 runs after 2 ½, 3 ½ or 4 ½, innings, the game will be called. The team with the 12, 10 or 8 run lead shall be the winner.

### **10U "B" and 8U Mercy Rule**

The mercy for the 10U "B" division 15, 12, 10 and 8 runs in all games. If one team is 15, 12, 10, or 8 runs ahead after 2, 3, 4, or 5 innings the game will be called. If the home team is ahead by 15, 12, 10, or 8 runs after 1½, 2½, 3½ or 4½, innings the game will be called. The team with the 15, 12, 10 or 8 run lead shall be the winner.

### **Base stealing is allowed in the 10 & Under Divisions**

Base stealing in the 10U "A" division of play is permitted in all games. Base stealing in the 10U "B" division is permitted only after the second Sunday and then only with *the unanimous approval of the managers from both teams on a game-to-game basis.*

NOTE: any deliberate intent of the batter to cause the pitcher to stop her motion to get an illegal pitch shall be considered a timeout and not an illegal pitch.

### **The 8U age group will not employ the dropped third strike, infield fly rules or base stealing.**

### **Visiting and Home Teams**

Home and visitor will be decided each game by coin flip.

During 2-day tournament and championship games, the higher seed shall have the choice of being the home or visitor.

Home teams shall take the field and begin warm-ups as the lineup exchange and ground rules meeting takes place at home plate. Catchers should be in gear and ready to go when the coaches' meeting breaks. Catcher and pitcher speed-up rules apply {see below}.

### **Scorekeeping**

Each team will keep and maintain their own scorebook. There will not be a separate official scorebook. The scorekeepers from each team should verify the score with each other at the end of each half inning and at the conclusion of the game. **The manager of the winning team shall be responsible for reporting the score to JTAA Tournament officials.** A clipboard will be located behind home plate for this purpose.

### **Catcher and Pitcher Speed Up Rule**

A catcher or pitcher that is on any base, regardless of the number of outs, may be replaced as a runner by *any player that has not been, and is currently not in the lineup* or by the last player that has made an out. Both catcher and/or pitcher are allowed to remain in the game.

If a base runner is not currently the catcher of record and she is going in to catch the next inning, please announce this to the umpire prior to her plate appearance. This is a courtesy to speed up the game.

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### Pitching Rubbers

The pitching rubbers for each game shall be set at the following distances:

8U and 10U	35 feet
12U	40 feet
14U* and HS	43 feet

*\*Note for 14U Division Only:* Our fall tournament is designed to prepare teams and players for the upcoming summer travel season. Starting 1/1/2011, 14U teams will be required to pitch from 43' in all USSSA tournaments. Accordingly, for teams and pitchers that are playing 14U next summer, we strongly encourage you to have your girls pitch from 43 feet this fall. However, we recognize that some 12U teams are playing up in the 14U division for the Fall (and will be playing 12U in the summer) and that a number of pitchers are pitching from 40 feet for their middle school teams. So, in the 14U division only, we will give each team the option of pitching from 43' or 40'. There will be a permanent 43' rubber on each mound. We will provide a temporary rubber that may be installed at 40 feet. If a coach/player wants to have his/her pitcher pitch from 40' instead of 43', it is that coach's responsibility to install/remove that temporary rubber *after each inning* (unless the other team has also elected to pitch from 40 feet, in which event the rubber may remain in place). Please note that one reason for the change in the USSSA rule is for the pitcher's safety (i.e. the pitcher will have more reaction time being 3 feet further from the batter). Accordingly, if you have your pitcher pitch from 40 feet, you do so at your own risk.

### Inclement Weather

The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, lightning, fire, panic or other causes, which place the patrons or players in peril.

The Town of Jupiter Parks and Recreation Department and the Tournament Director are also empowered to pull teams off the fields at any time due to inclement weather.

Jupiter Community Park is protected by the Thor Guard Lightning Prediction and Warning System. Thor Guard predicts the probability of a lightning hazard in an area up to 25 square miles. More importantly, it also provides a specific reading of the risk in the immediate area.

In the event that the Thor Guard Lightning Prediction System horn sounds, that indicates that a lightning storm is currently moving in the direction of the park. For safety, everyone must calmly start moving out of the stands and off of the playing fields, including dugouts, toward shelter. Please go to your car. Do not remain in dugouts.

It is important to note that lightning does not need to be visible before a warning is given.

### Protests

Protests will be handled immediately. One hundred dollars (\$100.00) in cash is required to file a protest. The fee will be returned if protest is upheld. All umpires' judgment calls are final. Player eligibility protests are on an individual basis: \$100.00 each player.

### No tolerance of verbal abuse of umpires

Any manager, coach, player, or fan verbally abusing an umpire will be asked to vacate the premises.

### Approved Bats and Helmets

Only approved bats may be used in this tournament. Helmets must have the NOCSAE sticker.

### Use of Altered Bats

The Tournament Director reserves the right and will BAN from this tournament any team using a bat in a game that has been altered, juiced, enhanced, loaded, doctored, shaved, painted, or otherwise customized. The Director is very much aware of doctored bats, especially some of the "enhanced" composite bats, which are max loaded and a screw pattern is put into the inner wall to make the bat flex in all directions. Bats altered in this fashion are considered "altered" and not permitted in play.

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### **Illegal vs. Altered Bats**

A batter IS ejected from the game for using an altered bat. If the altered bat has been enhanced as described above, the Tournament Director will eject an ENTIRE team for the remainder of the tournament. No refunds. No excuses. Don't do it!

A batter using an illegal bat or non-approved bat is NOT ejected from the game. The bat is removed from the game and may no longer be used in any remaining games.

**Metal spikes are prohibited in all divisions except in the High School Division.**

*Directions to Jupiter Softball Fields:*

**Jupiter Community Park**  
**3377 Church Street**  
**Jupiter, FL 33458**

From Florida Turnpike to exit 116 (Jupiter) or from 1-95, take Exit 87A (Indiantown Rd. East)  
East on Indiantown Road  
Turn Left (north) on Island Way (next to Duffy's Sports Grill)  
Park entrance on right

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Web site: <http://www.jtaasoftball.org>

*Play hard. Play fair. Have fun.*