



- The RULES of FASTBALL 45

FASTBALL 45 is innovative and dynamic! An exciting new product with modifications to provide a higher paced and intense version of softball.

The concept is designed to enhance the best parts of the game with higher frequency. To achieve this state of play traditional rules have been broken and radicalised to; increase the amount of ball in play, increase double plays, scoring opportunities and the points system itself.

FASTBALL 45 Overview:

- 45 mins or 4 innings
- 3 balls and 3 strikes
- 3 outs per inning
- Double play clears an inning
- Runner(s) starting on base every inning
- Double points for successful squeeze plays
- Baserunners able to lead off earlier
- Offensive power plays
- Yellow and red cards.

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Note WBSC rules apply except for the following modifications.

1. THE GAME

REGULATION GAME

- 4 innings or 45 mins.

TEAM ROSTERS

- The regional Fastball 45 rounds will see a limit of 15 players per team. For the finals weekend only 13 players are allowed on the team roster.

TEAM REPLACEMENTS

- Before & during the regional rounds, teams will be allowed replacements if players need to pull out due to injuries or extreme circumstances which prevent them from playing their regional round.

Before the finals weekend, teams will be allowed replacements if players need to pull out due to injuries or extreme circumstances (NOTE: Not being able to get work leave for the finals weekend is not an extreme circumstance). A medical certificate is required to replace an injured player. Replacement players shall be from their local region.

During the finals weekend, teams will not be allowed replacement players.

TIME LIMIT PLAYING RULES

- Time Limit for all FASTBALL 45 games shall be 45 mins. Where time does not allow for the complete playing of games as per Rule 1.2.1 (SNZ). The following governs the rules surrounding the time keeping of such games.
 - a. One person to monitor time (official scorer)
 - b. If a regulation game is completed prior to time then the game ceases
 - c. If a regulation game is incomplete at time, then the score will revert back to the last completed innings unless the home team (team batting second) is winning. If the last completed innings is a tie, then the winner will be determined by, 1) number of hits 2) number of home runs 3) double plays 4) squeeze plays 5) double steals
 - d. The new inning starts when the final out is made (Rule 1.1.5) not when the first pitch is thrown
 - e. No time stoppage is allowed for injury or protests, unless the injury is significant, and a player cannot be moved from the field.
- New innings will not commence with less than 5 minutes to go.

TIE BREAKER OPTION (Non Sky Sport production)

Tournament organisers may apply a “tie breaker” to determine an outright winner, as below.

- The offensive team begins the inning with loaded bases; with the seventh hitter in the batting order placed on third base, the eighth on second and the ninth on first base.
- The offensive team has “one” out to score as many runs as possible.
- Once the offensive team is retired the defensive team will have an opportunity to bat with the same scenario as above.
- If the scores are still locked, further tie breakers will be played to determine an outright winner.

Please note: This option is purely for the purposes of clubs and associations running regional tournaments and not Softball NZ events in collaboration with Sky Sport.

2. RESULT

GAMES CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER

- In the event a game(s) is cancelled due to inclement weather teams will be awarded 2 points each.

INDIVIDUAL GAMES

- Points will be awarded on 4 for a win, 2 for a tied game loss and 1 for a loss by 2 or less. Where tied game loss points are awarded no other points can be gained.

DETERMINING A WINNER FROM A TIED GAME.

- If a game is tied after the completion of 4 innings or 45 mins the winner will be determined through the following criteria:
 - 1) Number of hits
 - 2) Number of home runs
 - 3) Double plays
 - 4) Squeeze plays
 - 5) Double steals

OVERALL REGIONAL QUALIFIER WINNER

- The team with the most points at the conclusion of the Regional round robin will win the FASTBALL 45 qualifier. If there are two or more teams tied on the same number of points the winner will be determined through the following criteria:
 - 1) Number of hits
 - 2) Number of home runs
 - 3) Double plays
 - 4) Squeeze plays
 - 5) Double steals

INNING

- 3 outs per inning

OVERALL NATIONAL WINNER

- The team with the most points at the conclusion of 'the Final' will win the FASTBALL 45 competition. If there are two or more teams tied on the same number of points the winner will be determined through the following criteria:
 - 1) Number of hits
 - 2) Number of home runs
 - 3) Double plays
 - 4) Squeeze plays
 - 5) Double steals

INNING

- 3 outs per inning

RUNNERS ON BASE

- 1st inning will start with runner on first base
- 2nd inning with runners on first and second base and
- 3rd inning with loaded bases.
- 4th inning will start with runner on first base

DEFENSIVE

- A double play gets the defensive side out of the innings regardless of the current number of outs.

OFFENSIVE POWER PLAY

Each team is allowed 'one' offensive power play.

- The Crew Chief will indicate a power play by pumping their fist above their head.
- The offensive team can reduce the defensive team by 1 player for two consecutive batters at any point in the game.
- The two consecutive batters cannot run into the next inning.
- Coaches are required to notify the Home Plate Umpire of their intention to initiate the power play prior to a new batter stepping up to the plate. The power play cannot be applied during an at bat.
- The defensive team will then remove one player from the field for the next two consecutive batters (not outs).
- Once the power play has concluded no more are available for that team.

SCORING RUNS

- A run scored off a squeeze play or safety squeeze is worth two points.
- The home plate umpire will notify both sides and scorers that a squeeze play has been successful.

SQUEEZE PLAY DECISIONS

- Homeplate umpire will notify both sides and scorers when a squeeze play has taken place. If this is challenged the Home Plate Umpire can confer with his crew. Scorers communicate to commentary team if need be.

3. PLAYING FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

OFFICIAL SOFTBALL

- The Mizuno 150 is the official game ball.
- 6 balls to be available throughout the game to ensure the game flows.

HOME RUN FENCE

- Where possible the home run fence will be 5 metres shorter than the International distance for both men and women i.e.
 - o 71 Metres (Men)
 - o 61 Metres (Women)

4. DEFENCE

ONE WARM-UP PITCH

- The pitcher to have one warm-up pitch at the start of the game and none between other innings.

BALLS & STRIKES

- 3 balls and 3 strikes

NO INTENTIONAL WALKS

- Hitters cannot be intentionally walked to negate the power play or increase the options for double plays.
- Any player that is walked during a power play will go directly to 2nd base. That would mean any players on base would advance accordingly if forced e.g. if there are runners on 2nd & 3rd the runner on 3rd would score and the runner on 2nd would advance to 3rd.

TEMPORARY CATCHERS

- A temporary catcher can come into the game if the catcher in the line-up isn't ready. The relieving catcher will not be charged as a substitution.

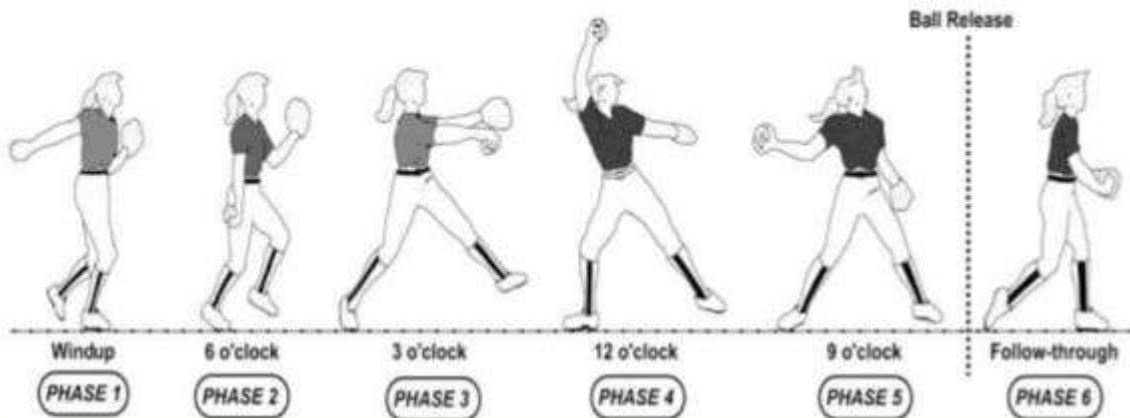
5. BATTING AND BASERUNNING

DESIGNATED HITTER (DH)

- A DH will be used as opposed to a Designated Player (DP)

BASERUNNERS

- Baserunners can lead off the base once the pitcher's arm is in the 9 o'clock position.



DESIGNATED RUNNER

- A Designated Runner will apply and will be used once within any given inning.

TEMPORARY RUNNERS

- The temporary runner for the catcher will apply with two down.
- The runners must be the batter due to bat 9th (then 8th then 7th) not the last out i.e. similar to the temporary runner and DR rule.
- Incorrect runners can be corrected during the time they are on base but not after they have scored. An incorrect runner on base that is due to bat should be removed from the base and not replaced on base. This would reduce the possibility of putting an incorrect speedy runner on that might be due to bat within the next 3 outs.

6. APPENDIX

APPENDIX - SCORING

TWO SCORERS

- Two scorers are required; one as a spotter, one to score. The spotter will also relay information to the commentary team.

APPENDIX - UMPIRES

4 CREW PLUS CHANGE UMPIRE

- A 4 crew plus change umpire is required. Changes to be undertaken off the diamond saving time allowing the game to continue.

CHANGE OVERS

- 1 minute for inning change overs as per umpire's judgement. If one team is deemed not to be ready when 1 minute has elapsed a ball or a strike will be called on the batter depending on if it is the defensive or offensive team at fault. No latitude will be given if the catcher in the line-up is not ready, the temporary catcher rule will come into effect.

NEW INNINGS

- New innings will not commence with less than 5 minutes to go before time expires i.e. after 40 minutes

NO PROTESTS

- In an attempt to play with the spirit of the FASTBALL 45 concept and to keep the game moving protests will not be permitted. The Chief Umpire for the tournament will always be next to the diamond, with the ability to consult with the umpires and teams quickly and efficiently on any rules. This will allow clarity, and help diffuse any misunderstanding between teams and umpires, especially as it is new to everyone.

OFF-FIELD UMPIRE

- The purpose of the Off-Field Umpire is to help speed up any substitution changes coaches may have. This umpire will hold onto team sheets and oversee any changes you may want to make. So, when making a change please look for the Off-Field Umpire, who will either sit with the scorers or by the gate at 1st base. From here they will be able to communicate the changes to the SKY commentary team. The Off-Field umpire will be in uniform and attend the plate meeting.

REMAIN IN POSITION

- Umpires are to remain in position between innings unless hydration required.

POWER PLAY

- Signal for the Power Play i.e. pumping the fist above the head.

YELLOW AND RED CARDS

- A yellow card is to be used as a warning, two yellow cards equates to a red.
- A red card to be used in the same manner as an ejection in the current rules.

DEFENSIVE AND OFFENSIVE CHANGES

- No penalties for incorrect defensive changes. Usual penalties should apply for incorrect offensive changes e.g. if a defensive substitute is not announced – no penalty but if an offensive player is not announced Rule 3.2.8 Effect applies. This would only occur when the unreported offensive substitute is in the game.

Should any situation arise that is not covered under the Softball New Zealand Rule book or the variations listed above they will be determined by the tournament committee