

# 2012 IACO SOFTBALL OFFICIALS CLASS

*Module 2*

Definitions & Rules Overview

## Definitions & Rules Overview Introduction

- ▣ At the end of this Module, the student should
  - Have a basic understanding of definitions and key terms they relate to officiating the sport of softball
  - Have a basic knowledge of general softball principles which will be built upon in later Modules
  - Become familiar with each area of the softball field and how they differ from each other

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### The Field

- ▣ Fair Territory
  - The part of the playing field within and including the foul lines from the point of home plate to the bottom of the home run fence, if applicable
  - Home plate, as well as the foul lines and poles are considered part of fair territory
    - ▣ Note: The front corner of each batter's box is also in fair territory
  - Extends vertically and infinitely

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### The Field

- ▣ Foul Territory
  - The part of the playing field outside the first and third base lines from home plate to the bottom of the home run fence (if one is used) and perpendicularly upwards
    - ▣ In Other Words: Any territory within the field of play that is not fair!

# Definitions & Rules Overview

## The Field

- ▣ Field of Play
  - The area within the which the ball may be legally played and fielded
  - Includes both fair and foul territory
  - In Other Words: “Live-Ball” Territory

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### The Field

- ▣ Dead-Ball Territory
  - The area beyond any real boundary, which can be defined as
    - ▣ Fence
    - ▣ Rope
    - ▣ Chalk Line
    - ▣ Stands
    - ▣ Bleachers

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### The Field

- ▣ Dead-Ball Territory
  - The area beyond any real boundary, which can be defined as
    - ▣ Dugouts
    - ▣ Player's Bench
    - ▣ Designated Media Area
    - ▣ Any imaginary boundary line as determined in the pre-game conference

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### The Field

- ▣ Dead-Ball Territory
  - In Other Words: A dead-ball area is any area *not* in the field of play!
  - Common Sense: If there is no fence to mark a dead-ball boundary, use the end of the fence or backstop to establish an out-of-play line

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### The Field

- ▣ Dead-Ball Territory
  - Common Sense: It is good practice to consider any area behind a fence or other unplayable area to be out-of-play
  - In Addition: If a ball becomes lodged in a fence or backstop, by rule it is considered to be in a dead-ball area

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### The Field

- ▣ Confines of the Field
  - Includes the field of play, designated dugout/bench area, and any area used for warm-ups adjacent to the field which is clearly visible by the umpire
  - Includes both live-ball and dead-ball territory
  - In Other Words: Anywhere within the umpire's visual range where anything related to his or her contest might occur!!!

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### The Field

- ▣ Boundary
  - Any line which separates one part of the “Confines of the Field” from another
  - The outside edge of a line marks the beginning of said area
  - The entire line is in the other area
  - In Other Words: The foul line is entirely in fair territory; the “out-of-play” line is entirely “in play”

## Definitions & Rules Overview Field Equipment & Markings

- ▣ Home Plate
  - Pentagon with three right angles
    - ▣ One edge is 17 inches
    - ▣ Two opposite edges are 8.5 inches
    - ▣ Two remaining edges are 12 inches
      - These edges coincide with both foul lines

## Definitions & Rules Overview Field Equipment & Markings

- ▣ Home Plate
  - Rear corner of home plate is 43 feet from front edge of pitcher's plate
  - Top surface shall be flush with the ground

## Definitions & Rules Overview Field Equipment & Markings

- ▣ Batter's Boxes
  - 7' x 3'
  - Marked on either side of home plate
  - Drawn so that the inside edge is exactly 6" from the 8'5-inch edges of home plate
  - Marked 4-feet forward and 3-feet behind the middle corners of home plate

## Definitions & Rules Overview Field Equipment & Markings

- ▣ Catcher's Box
  - 10' x 8'5"
  - Left and right edges of the catcher's box coincide with the outermost edges of the batter's box
  - Back edge of catcher's box is exactly 10 feet behind the rear edge of either batter's box

## Definitions & Rules Overview Field Equipment & Markings

- ▣ Pitcher's Plate
  - 24" x 6"
  - Rubber or other suitable synthetic material
  - Flush with the ground
  - Shall be enclosed by a circle with an 8-foot radius measured from the exact center of the pitcher's plate (Pitcher's Circle)

## Definitions & Rules Overview Field Equipment & Markings

- ▣ Bases
  - 15" x 15"
  - Can be:
    - ▣ White bags filled with a soft material
    - ▣ Molded rubber
    - ▣ Synthetic material

## Definitions & Rules Overview Field Equipment & Markings

- ▣ Bases
  - Securely attached to the ground or an anchor system
  - Oriented so that the outside edge of first and third base coincide with the outside edge of the foul line

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Field Equipment & Markings

- ▣ Bases
  - First and third are exactly 60' measured from the apex of home plate to the rear edge of the base on the foul line
  - The exact center of second base shall be anchored at a point which is at an intersecting point exactly 60' measured from the rear corner of first and third bases
  - The rear corner of second base is exactly 84'10 ¼" from the apex of home plate

## Definitions & Rules Overview Field Equipment & Markings

- ▣ Double First Base
  - A dual-colored base which is used for safety during close plays at first base
  - Generally, the white portion is entirely in fair territory, and the first base foul line matches up with the edge
    - ▣ With a few exceptions, this base is to be used by the defense when a play is made on the batter-runner

## Definitions & Rules Overview Field Equipment & Markings

- ▣ Double First Base
  - The colored portion (usually orange) is entirely in foul territory
    - ▣ With a few exceptions, this base is to be used by the batter-runner when she is played upon
  - *MANDATORY IN ALL IHSA SANCTIONED SOFTBALL CONTESTS – NO EXCEPTIONS!!*

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Live Ball
  - The interval begins with the pitcher taking the ball inside the 16-foot circle and in a position where she is ready to pitch with the catcher in the catcher's box and all other fielders in fair territory
  - The interval ends when a ball becomes dead
  
- ▣ Dead Ball
  - A ball which is not in play

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Delayed Dead Ball
  - A situation in which a violation occurs and is recognized by the umpire, but is not ruled upon until the ball becomes dead
  - Examples include:
    - ▣ Obstruction
    - ▣ Catcher's Obstruction
    - ▣ Illegal Pitch
    - ▣ Illegally fielding a batted or thrown ball

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Blocked Ball
  - A live ball (pitched, batted, or thrown) which:
    - ▣ Is touched, stopped, or handled by a person not engaged in the game
    - ▣ Touches any object which is not part of the official playing equipment or official playing area
    - ▣ Touches loose equipment
    - ▣ In Other Words: A ball which in live-ball territory which becomes unplayable by rule or ground rule

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Fair Ball
  - Any batted ball which
    - ▣ Settles or is touched on or over fair territory between home and first base or home and third base
    - ▣ Touches or bounds over any base
    - ▣ While on or over fair territory comes in contact with any player or umpire, including their clothing or equipment

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Fair Ball
  - Any batted ball which
    - While over fair territory, passes out of the playing area in flight
    - First falls or is first touched on or over fair territory beyond first, second, or third base

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Foul Ball
  - Any batted ball which
    - ▣ Settles or is touched on or over foul territory between home and first base or home and third base
    - ▣ Bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory
    - ▣ First falls to the ground or is first touched on or over foul territory beyond first or third base
    - ▣ While over foul territory, a runner interferes with a defensive player's attempt to field a batted ball

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Foul Ball
  - Any batted ball which
    - ▣ Touches the batter while she is still in the batter's box
    - ▣ Touches the bat a second time while the bat is still in the batter's hand and she is still in the batter's box
    - ▣ Goes directly from the bat to any part of the catcher's body or her equipment, excluding her hand or glove

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Foul Tip
  - Any batted ball which goes sharply and directly from the bat to the catcher's mitt or hand and is legally caught by the catcher
  - Is always a strike
  - The ball remains live

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Dead Ball
  - Things which cause a ball to become dead include:
    - ▣ “Time” being called or granted by an umpire
    - ▣ Foul Ball
    - ▣ A pitched, thrown, carried, or batted ball entering dead-ball territory
    - ▣ A live ball becoming blocked

# Definitions & Rules Overview

## Key Terms

- ▣ Dead Ball
  - Things which cause a ball to become dead include:
    - ▣ Violation by an offensive team member
      - Interference
      - Leaving a base early
      - Malicious contact
    - ▣ After a delayed dead ball is recognized by the umpire, the offended runner or batter-runner is subsequently put out

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Touching
  - Contact with the ball, equipment, or a person
  - No distinction is made between touching and being touched
  - In Other Words: Any two things which come into contact are *touching each other*

# Definitions & Rules Overview

## Key Terms

- ▣ Touching
  - Things that might touch each other during the course of a game include:
    - ▣ Ball
    - ▣ Bat
    - ▣ Glove
    - ▣ Offensive Player
    - ▣ Defensive Player
    - ▣ Coach/Bench Personnel

# Definitions & Rules Overview

## Key Terms

- ▣ Touching
  - Things that might touch each other during the course of a game include:
    - ▣ Base
    - ▣ Boundary
    - ▣ Fence
    - ▣ Umpire
    - ▣ Loose Equipment
    - ▣ The Ground
    - ▣ Spectator/Media Personnel or Equipment
    - ▣ Any object which is out-of-play

# Definitions & Rules Overview

## Key Terms

- ▣ Touching
  - Fair or Foul?
    - ▣ A player's location in the field of play has no bearing when determining whether a batted ball is fair or foul
    - ▣ The location of the ball when it is touched is the only determining factor

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ In Flight
  - Any thrown, pitched, or batted ball which has not yet touched the ground, an object, or person
  - Exception: If the ball touches any player, it is still considered to be in flight

# Definitions & Rules Overview

## Key Terms

- ▣ Catch
  - The act of a fielder to secure possession of a batted, thrown, or pitched ball with either the hand or glove/mitt in its proper place
  - In order to establish validity, the fielder must demonstrate control of the ball, and that its release is both voluntary and intentional

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Catch
  - If possession is lost during a transfer or throw, then a catch should be ruled
  - A batted ball which is caught in flight results in the batter-runner being put out
  - A catch can only be made while the ball is live

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Key Terms

- ▣ Trap
  - A ball that hits the ground immediately before or simultaneous with a catch
  - A ball that is on the ground with a hand or glove/mitt on top of it is considered to be trapped
  - A trapped ball is not considered to be caught
  - A trapped ball is not considered to be in possession of a player

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Live-Ball vs. Dead-Ball

- ▣ Live-Ball or Dead-Ball?
  - A live ball becomes dead when it *touches* something in dead-ball territory
    - ▣ IN OTHER WORDS: If the ball passes through dead-ball territory in flight, it remains live
  - The player's location when making a play is also a determining factor

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Live-Ball vs. Dead-Ball

- ▣ Live-Ball or Dead-Ball?
  - A player is in dead-ball territory IF
    - ▣ Either foot is touching entirely in dead-ball territory
    - ▣ Any portion of a body part other than a foot is touching dead-ball territory
    - ▣ A player has entered dead-ball territory and has not yet re-established herself with BOTH feet touching the field of play

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Live-Ball vs. Dead-Ball

- ▣ Live-Ball or Dead-Ball?
  - A player remains in the field of play IF
    - ▣ Any part of either foot is touching the field of play, and no part is touching completely out of play
      - In Other Words: The other foot may be in the air

## Definitions & Rules Overview

### Live-Ball vs. Dead-Ball

- ▣ Live-Ball or Dead-Ball?
  - A player remains in the field of play IF
    - ▣ They have left the ground entirely, as long as she was considered to be in the field of play when doing so
    - In Other Words: The player may grasp or climb a fence, or dive into dead-ball territory in order to make a play

## Definitions & Rules Overview Review

- ▣ Live-ball territory consists of which two areas?
- ▣ What are the confines of the field?
- ▣ What is a boundary?
- ▣ When is the use of a double-first base optional?
- ▣ What is the distance from the pitcher's plate to home plate?
  - Measured from where?

## Definitions & Rules Overview Review

- ▣ Live-Ball or Dead-Ball?
  - Fair Ball
  - Foul Ball
  - Batted ball touches the foul line beyond first base
  - Ground ball bounds over the front-outside corner of third base
  - Ball hits fence
  - Ball gets stuck in fence

## Definitions & Rules Overview Review

- ▣ Live-Ball or Dead-Ball?
  - Batted ball hits base coach
  - Batted ground ball touches third baseman's glove over foul ground with both of her feet touching fair ground
  - With both of her feet behind home plate, catcher fields batted ground ball which is in the air over home plate
  - Fair batted ball goes over fence in right field

# Definitions & Rules Overview Review

□ Questions?