

Section 8 - softball Playoffs – 2026

All play in and first round games will be one game. The quarter-finals, the semi-finals and finals will be a 2 out of 3. We will use a three-umpire system of mechanics during the semis and finals.

Officials should be in the lot at least 35-40 minutes early. Be by the backstop no later than 30 minutes prior to game time. All officials should dress alike. While approaching the field, check to see that any player warming up a pitcher is wearing a catcher's helmet and mask with throat protection. Make sure that the pitching distance is correct. The umpires should walk the field together.

Going over ground rules and emphasizing the importance of good sportsmanship are standard inclusions for the pre-game plate conference. Examine each line-up card for possible errors and always offer the coach an opportunity to check the card a second time before you officially accept it. DURING YOUR PRE-GAME MEETING WITH THE COACH, REMIND THEM OF DUGOUT CONDUCT SAFETY RULES AND ONE ON-DECK BATTER RULES. REMEMBER TO RECEIVE AFFIRMATION FROM EACH COACH THAT, TO THE BEST OF THEIR KNOWLEDGE, THEY BELIEVE THAT THEIR PLAYERS ARE LEGALLY EQUIPPED TO FOR PARTICIPATION AND THE FIELD IS SET UP PROPERLY. Follow suggested Nassau County system mechanics as demonstrated at the playoff clinic. Study well all web-site printed materials with reference to playoffs. If, you deviate, COMMUNICATE! Even when using highly suggested mechanics, all crews need to have a pre-game meeting to discuss those techniques — especially any variations. Reminder — when handling difficult calls or situations that require further review, if the opportunity presents itself, it is often best to conference with your fellow umpires. You can "gather additional information and thoughts" to "get it right or correct it" and "you will give the appearance of unity by standing together" during difficult situations. The original calling umpire announces the final decision.

Every tournament game is played to a seven-inning completion except when 12 run rule is applied after five or more innings. If tied, NYS mandates the tiebreaker rule is used beginning in the top of the 10th inning. Optic-Yellow approved softballs with red seams will be used throughout the tournament

as has been the case throughout the regular season at each particular home school.

For all playoffs, if lightning is seen or if thunder is heard, seek shelter in a safe place and try, if at all possible, to WAIT OUT THE STORM. A 30 minute waiting period is used for this type of situation before resuming play. For each new lightning/thunder incidence, another 30 minute waiting time begins. If the game cannot be continued on that day due to field conditions, weather, darkness, peril etc., it will be considered a "suspended" game. No matter what inning you are in, that game is to be resumed on another day from the EXACT point of the suspension and then played to its full conclusion. Take note of all pertinent information on the score sheets and lineup cards. Sign that you have reviewed documents. Leave your lineup card with the official scorekeeper. Officials assigned to a resumed game should read and know all particulars about resumed game rulings in the rulebook.

Try to settle protests and unusual situations immediately on site. Have a rulebook in your equipment bag or nearby car.

The following procedures should be followed at game sites:

1. At the higher seed's home site, the home team should be off the field and finished with their warm ups at least 20 minutes before game time. The visitors should be ready to take the field 20 minutes before game time. Warm ups on the field will be limited to no more than 15 minutes.
2. At a neutral site, the first team to arrive will take the field for warm ups first.

****Foster Continual Communication with your umpiring partners as you promote "Fair Play for All".**

Know that The Nassau County Softball Officials' Association is PROUD to have you out there representing us All!

3 Umpire Systems for the Semi-Finals & Finals in Nassau County

The plate umpire should go over procedures that can be easily followed with partners in a pre-game meeting. Techniques that most resemble the usual systems practiced during the regular season of play will help umpires to concentrate on making the correct calls rather than concentrating on new positions to be taken or new changed responsibilities. The goal is to be comfortable with the system to be used. Optional GB2 NYSSO three umpire mechanics as published in the new NYSSO Manual may be used or may not be used by any crew's choice.

When no one is on base, let's GO OUT ON ALL FLY BALLS TO THE OUTFIELD. Get a good angle and try not to run directly at the fielder. The first and third base umpires split the outfield responsibility. Third base umpire takes flies directly to the center fielder and to her left; first base umpire takes flies to the right of the center fielder. The plate umpire will have no "outfield" fly ball responsibility when no one is on base. On a routine fly ball catch, in Nassau County we at least raise the fist when the ball is caught. If no catch takes place and you are out there, stay out there. A two-umpire system will handle any remaining base runners very well.

In NASSAU COUNTY WHEN A RUNNER OR RUNNERS ARE ON BASE, make a choice: 1. - to go out to the outfield as you would in the regular two umpire system (when you anticipate a difficult catch or for a long fly ball or looping liner down the line) This is preferred! as indicated on page 47 of NYSSO Manual. or 2. — go out on almost all fly balls. Your crew decides. If you definitely go out to the outfield, STAY OUT THERE. You have "catch", "no catch", "fair", "foul", "live", "dead". Your partners will assume a two-man system. In this case, the Rim technique might even take place. If you don't choose to or need to go to the outfield, come into the infield as usual and button hook to watch bases being touched and pick up runners moving or tagging up. At that point, the plate umpire will call and signal the catches in the F

In NASSAU COUNTY try to let the third base umpire take tag ups from third base for all occasions since the plate umpire has done this during regular season play. The second base umpire can judge tag ups from second base and the home plate umpire can judge tag ups from first base if no umpire goes out to the outfield to judge a fly ball catch. Otherwise use standard two-man tag up responsibilities when an umpire goes out to the outfield.

In NASSAU COUNTY we do not automatically share fair and foul call with balls landing on, bounding over or initially landing near but over first or third bases. The plate umpire makes most fair/foul calls unless base umpire goes out near the line. Occasionally when no one is on, an umpire standing on the foul line might be able to assist, but often he/she must be on the move to be ahead of a possible play. If you choose to share fair/foul coverage, the plate umpire has the call on a ball up to the front edge of the base. Base umpire can have the call on a ball landing on the base, bounding over the base or first falling beyond the base.

THE ROTATION SYSTEM used when three umpires officiate a game is ALWAYS CLOCKWISE. The rotation system is in effect whenever the first base umpire is located in the starting position down the foul line at first base prior to the pitch (as long as he/she or the other umpire doesn't go out on a difficult fly ball situation). During normal rotation, once the first base umpire has completed his/her responsibilities for a play at first, he/she moves toward home plate for a possible call at the plate. The plate umpire moves out from behind home plate and then releases and goes up to the third base "holding area" and possibly onto fair ground if a call needs to be made on an actual play at third base. If there is a later throw to first base for some reason, the 3BU becomes responsible since rotation mode puts him/her in a feasible position for a later action.

Obviously, there is NO ROTATION possible when the first base umpire is positioned behind and between the second baseman and second base at the time of the pitch. This is called the STAY MODE position for the umpires.

When does the plate umpire usually rotate toward third?

1. No one on and first base umpire is certain he/she can release BR/R as she moves clearly toward second base and ALSO that the third base umpire has properly rotated to a calling position at second base. (Manual pg.54)
2. Runner on 1st only
3. Runner on 3rd only

When does the first base umpire start at the first base foul line position? When is the rotation possibility in effect?

1. No one on. Once you can release a runner having touched first base, MOVE in foul territory toward home.
2. Runner on 1st only. Rotation Mode as well but, after any initial reason to stay for a quick play at 1st.
3. Runner on third base only.

1

Always use eye and/or vocal messages to make sure others are rotating when you are.

When using traditional mechanics, when does the third base umpire start in the third base foul line position?

1. No one on. READ page 54 NYSSO Manual about Rotation Mode with No One On!!! Runner on 3rd only!! You may start at third, but you are on the MOVE inside the diamond quickly toward second base.
2. Runner on third base only. ROTATION Mode as well but after any initial reason for a quick play to 3rd.
3. Bases loaded. (Stay Mode)
4. Anytime second base is occupied. (Stay Mode)
5. Runners on first base and third base. (Stay Mode) We can keep it simple by using # 1 — 5 above.

In traditional mechanics, when does the first base umpire start in the counter rotated or second base position behind and between second base and the second baseman?

1. Anytime second base is occupied. (Stay Mode)
2. When there are runners on first base and third base. (Stay Mode)

When does the third base umpire start in the position behind second base either in line with second and third or in line with first and second? (Meaning, on either side of 2nd base and not too far away.)

1. Runner on first only.

(Should a call at second be required, the 3BU can stay outside the diamond (if starting on "B" position side of second base) or come inside the diamond if starting on "C" position side of second base. When UI and PU rotate, 3U can also deal with plays between 1st and 2nd.

Reminder —As U3, just because you might be starting from down the line behind third base doesn't mean you stay there. In most situations, you are constantly hustling toward second base inside the diamond during action and also moving into the infield to buttonhook to view fly ball catches relating to possible tag-up or missed base appeal plays.

Responsibilities for judging runners leaving the base too soon prior to a pitch release:

First Base Umpire — Watch first base with runner on first only or first and third only. Watch second base anytime a runner on second.

Third Base Umpire — Watch first base when runners on first and second. Watch third base anytime a runner on third. Watch first and third when bases loaded.

Who brushes the pitcher's plate? The third base umpire does this as the fielding team exits to their dugout and BEFORE the pitcher takes her warm up pitches. NEVER stand there and wait to hand the ball to the pitcher.

Where to stand between innings... First and third base umpires go to the neutral zones in the outfield unless you need to communicate with the plate umpire when he/she is positioned along your foul line.

COMMUNICATE with each other while moving into various positions during action. Especially communicate if you deviate. Don't hesitate to TALK to each other. Base umpires - have shoulders square to the plate.

N.Y.S. suggests several helpful signals that you may or may not choose to incorporate into your particular umpiring crew.

1. Point down to signify no rotation in effect (The "stay mode")
2. Circle wrists to signify rotation in effect.
3. Arms extended forward in "V" to signify splitting the outfield coverage on fly balls.
4. Thumbs pointing back over shoulders to signify that an official has fly coverage from left fielder to right fielder.
5. Timed play with two outs by touching wrist where watch would be worn and extending two fingers.
6. Leaving too soon on a pitch release to alert partners that you know who you are in charge of by brushing hip and pointing to base runner.
7. infield fly, infield fly wave off, drop third strike possibility as needed, etc...
8. Signal the plate umpire or walk over yourself if you see multiple players out of the dug-out swinging bats as not allowed.