

**THE NATIONAL WHEELCHAIR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION**  
**BYLAWS and INTERPRETATIONS**  
**SEPTEMBER 1, 1986**

**ARTICLE ONE**

Section 1. Principles of Amateurism. An Amateur wheelchair softball player is one who engages in the sport for the physical, mental, social, and recreational benefits he or she derives there from, and to whom participation in the sport is an avocation.

- (A) A wheelchair softball player shall not be eligible for participation in the sport if:
  - (1) He or she takes or has taken pay, or has accepted the promise of pay, in any form, for participation in the sport, or
  - (2) He or she has entered into any agreement of any kind to compete in any professional version of the sport or to negotiate a professional contract in the sport, or
  - (3) He or she has directly or indirectly used his or her skill for pay, or personal gain, in any form in the sport.
- (B) A wheelchair softball player may participate as an individual or as a member of a team against professional athletes, but he or she may not participate on a team known to him or her, or which reasonably should have been known to him or her, to be a professional wheelchair team.

“A professional wheelchair team shall be any team which is a member of, or affiliated with a recognized professional sports organization or any organized team on which there is an athlete receiving payment of any kind or form ( other than actual and necessary expenses for game trips) for his or her participation.”

Section 2. Principle Governing Recruiting. The recruiting of wheelchair softball players shall be controlled by Bylaws enacted by the Association.

Section 3. Principles of Ethical Conduct. It shall be a member team’s responsibility to apply and enforce the following principles:

- (A) Individuals officially affiliated with and in the service of a member team to administer or coach wheelchair softball all participating player’s, shall deport themselves with honesty and sportsmanship at all times so that wheelchair softball and wheelchair sports as a whole, the teams and they, as individuals, shall represent the honor and dignity of fair play, and the generally recognized high standards associated with wholesome competitive sports.
- (B) To always hold in esteem other wheelchair softball teams.

**ARTICLE TWO - MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Eligibility for Membership Any group of individuals organized as a team for the purpose of playing wheelchair softball, which accepts and observes the principles set forth in the Articles and Bylaws of the Association is eligible for membership in this Association.

Section 2. Conditions and Obligations of Membership. The members of this Association agree:

- (A) To administer their wheelchair softball program in accordance with the Articles, Bylaws and other legislation of the Association.
- (B) To establish and maintain high standards of personal honor, eligibility, and fair play.

Section 3. Class of Membership Membership shall be of the following two classes:

Conference-member teams and independents.

- (A) Conference-member teams shall be those teams approved for active membership in a conference recognized by the National Wheelchair Softball Association. They shall be entitled to all the privileges of membership under the Articles, Bylaws and Executive Regulation of the Association, and all privileges incidental thereto.

- (B) Independent teams shall be those teams whose geographical location or whose developmental status at the time of application for membership in the National Wheelchair Softball Association does not warrant their compliance with a full conference schedule. They shall provide sufficient evidence and intent of purpose in becoming members of a recognized conference when conditions are such that it would be in their and other's interests to so proceed. They shall be entitled to all the privileges of members under the Articles, Bylaws, and Executive Regulations of the Association, and all privileges incidental thereto.

Section 2. Application for Membership.

- (A) A wheelchair softball team seeking to become a member of the Association shall make application in writing to the commissioner and shall accompany such application with a check for the annual dues which would be payable by it if an active member of the Association.
- (B) The Commissioner shall determine whether the applying team is acceptable for membership in an accredited National Wheelchair Softball Association Conference in the region covered by the league.
- (C) Should the applicant fail to qualify for membership, the dues paid by it shall be refunded.

Section 3. Dues to members.

- (A) The annual dues for membership shall be \$450.00.
- (B) Dues are due on July 1st of each year and are delinquent on July 31st. A member team which is delinquent in payment of its dues shall pay an additional penalty of 50 percent. A member team which continues to be delinquent in payment of its dues and fines after August 15th shall not be permitted to vote at an annual meeting of the National Wheelchair Softball Association or to compete in Post- season competition.
- (C) Dues, fines, and assessments submitted by a member team must be sent to the National Wheelchair Softball Association, 1616 Todd Ct., Hastings, Minn. 55033.
- (D) \$ 100.00 per team shall be given to the host of the NWST to help defray cost of the Tournament.

Section 4. Team Registration.

Each team is required to submit to the office of the Commissioner by July 1<sup>st</sup> its roster of players on the official NWSA roster form.

Section 5. Structure.

- (A) The National Wheelchair Softball Association shall have the following structure for the member teams.
  - (1) The National Wheelchair Softball Association
  - (2) The Divisions
  - (3) The Leagues
  - (4) The Conferences
  - (5) The Member Teams
- (B) The Executive Committee and the Commissioner are empowered to, as more member teams join the Association, establish timetable for the formation of the Divisions that will feed the teams into National competition. With further growth Leagues shall be established to feed teams into League Playoffs.

Section 6. Termination of Membership. Discipline of Members.

- (A) Disciplinary powers of the Association shall be exercised in accordance with the provisions of this section and the Bylaws.
- (B) The membership of any member team failing to meet the conditions and obligations of membership may be terminated or suspended or the member otherwise disciplined by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.
- (C) The membership of any member team failing to pay dues for one year shall be automatically terminated.
- (D) Upon any termination or suspension of membership, all rights and privileges shall cease forthwith.

Section 7. Reinstatement of Members.

- (A) Any member team whose membership has been terminated may be reinstated to membership by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee.

- (B) Any member team whose membership has been suspended may be reinstated to good standing in accordance with the terms of the suspension action, or:
  - (1) At any time by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee or,
  - (2) A two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at the annual meeting.
- C) Any member disciplined by the Executive Committee of the Association shall resume good standing in accordance with the terms of the disciplinary action taken, or may be restored to good standing at any time by:
  - (1) A two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee or:
  - (2) A two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at the annual meeting.

### **ARTICLE THREE - PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

Section 1. Players. A player is an individual, because of permanent severe leg disability or paralysis of the lower portion of his/her body, who would benefit through participation in wheelchair softball, and who would be denied the opportunity to play softball were it not for wheelchair adaptations.

Section 2. Classifications. Player classifications and rules are outlined in the rules of the National Wheelchair Softball Association.

### **ARTICLE FOUR - ORGANIZATION**

Section 1. Executive Committee. The establishment and direction of the general policy of the Association in the interim between the annual meetings, is committed to the Association Officers, up to three Assistant Commissioners, and the Commissioner. The Executive Committee shall always have an odd number, and be elected at the annual meeting as prescribed in this article.

- (A) The Executive Committee shall be constituted as follows:
  - (1) The President
  - (2) The First Vice-President
  - (3) The Second Vice-President
  - (4) The Secretary
  - (5) The Treasurer
  - (6) The First Director at Large
  - (7) The Second Director at Large
- (B) Any individual, regardless of race, color, sex, or national origin and physical or mental disability, may be eligible for office in the National Wheelchair Softball Association
- (C) For the transaction of business, a quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall meet as follows:
  - (1) Prior to the business sessions of the annual meeting, and
  - (2) At such times as the president may direct.
- (D) The Executive Committee shall:
  - (1) Transact the business and administer the affairs of the Association in accordance with the policies of the Association.
  - (2) Require all income from membership dues, and all income from other sources, except as may be provided in the Bylaws or Executive Regulations, to be deposited in the general treasury.
  - (3) Adopt a budget for the ensuing fiscal year prior to the end of any current fiscal year.
  - (4) Adopt regulations providing for:
    - (i) The expenditure of Association funds
    - (ii) Conduct of Association Play-offs and tournaments, and
    - (iii) Distribution of the income of the Association
  - (5) Arrange for the bonding of the Officers of the Association charged with handling funds.
  - (6) Provide for the various accounts and arrange for the auditing of them.
  - (7) Report its proceeding to the business session of the annual meeting.
  - (8) Reverse any decision made by the Commissioner which it deems to be contrary to the best interests of the Association or of wheelchair softball or which it deems to be contrary to the best interpretation of the Articles, By-laws Rules and Regulations, by a majority vote of the full Executive Committee.

- (E) The Executive Committee may transact such part of its business by correspondence, as it may deem advisable.
- (F) Election of the Executive Committee. The members of the Executive Committee shall be elected at the annual meetings of the Association.
  - (1) Each officer shall be elected for a term of five years.
    - (i) The President shall be elected in the year zero (0) and five (5) of each decade.
    - (ii) The First Vice President shall be elected in the year two (2) and seven (7) of each decade.
    - (iii) The Second Vice President shall be elected in the year four (4) and nine (9) of each decade.
    - (iv) The Secretary shall be elected in the year three (3) and eight (8) of each decade.
    - (v) The Treasurer shall be elected in the year one (1) and six (6) of each decade.
  - (2) Each Director at Large shall be elected to a three-year term.

(G) Duties of Officers.

- (1) The president shall preside at the meetings of the Association and of the Executive Committee. In the absence of the President, or in case he is incapacitated, one of the Vice-Presidents chosen by him (or in case of the President's disability, one of the Vice-Presidents chosen by the Executive Committee), shall take over and perform the duties of the President.
- (2) Each Vice-President shall perform such duties as the President may direct.
- (3) The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping records of the meetings of the Association and the Executive Committee and reporting to the Association at each annual meeting the minutes of the Association meeting of the preceding year.
- (4) The Treasurer shall be responsible for all funds of the Association and submitting at the annual meeting a detailed report of all receipts and disbursements of monies. Prior to the end of any fiscal year, he shall be responsible for presenting to the Executive Committee a proposed operation budget for the ensuing fiscal year.
- (5) Each Director at large shall perform such duties as the President may direct.

Section 2. The Commissioner. The Commissioner of the National Wheelchair Softball Association shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee. He shall have executive authority and be responsible to the Executive Committee only. The Commissioner shall serve a term of Seven years beginning in 1998.

(A) The Commissioner of the National Wheelchair Softball Association shall:

- (1) Make and enforce decisions based upon interpretations of the Articles, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations established by the National Wheelchair Softball Association.
- (2) Make interpretations and decisions on matters not covered by National Wheelchair Softball Association Rules and Regulations based upon precedence within the Association.
- (3) Make interpretations and decisions on matters, which are not covered by the National Wheelchair Softball Association rules and regulations and have no precedence.
- (4) Review, whenever possible, any matters not covered by the Articles, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations with the Executive Committee.
- (5) Report to the Executive Committee with and explanation and justification any decision rendered without prior review by the Committee.
- (6) Serve as a professional advisor and resource person to the National Wheelchair Softball Association.
- (7) Arrange for the composition, publication and distribution of a newsletter which will include official notices, items of business, up-to-date progress of teams, conferences and leagues, officials and other designated persons affiliated with the sport.
- (8) Serve as a central officer for the collection, recording and distribution of administrative forms, proceedings, correspondence and other materials, which have not been specifically assigned to a member of the Executive Committee.
- (9) Submit an annual report to the Executive Committee and the annual meeting of the Association.

(B) The Commissioner shall have the authority to appoint up to three Assistant commissioners. The Assistant Commissioners shall perform such duties as the Commissioner may direct. The Executive Committee shall review the Assistant Commissioners term every two years.

- (C) The Commissioner may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee at any time.

## **ARTICLE FIVE - COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1. General Committees.**

- (A) The following are the general committees established by the Association: Hall of Fame, Rules, and Classifications.
  - (1) The members of the above committees shall be appointed by the President of the Association in consultation with the Commissioner and approved by the Executive Committee. The President shall designate one member of each committee as chairperson.
  - (2) Each chairperson is authorized to recommend to the Executive Committee that a member be replaced if such member is not discharging his/her duties properly. The Executive Committee shall have authority to remove by majority vote such member and appoint a replacement.
- (B) The Hall of Fame Committee shall submit to the Executive committee before July 1st of each year the name of no more than two individuals in the class of competitor and no more than one individual in the class of non-competitor for induction into the National Wheelchair Softball Hall of Fame.
  - (1) It shall receive nominations from the membership from which the name shall be selected.
  - (2) The nominee must have completed a minimum of 10 full years as an active member of the National Wheelchair Softball Association (except herein extenuating circumstances dictating a lesser number of years can be identified.)
  - (3) The criteria for selection shall be established by the Hall of Fame Committee and be made a part of the Executive Regulations of the National Wheelchair Softball Association.
- (C) The Rules Committee shall invite and review proposed modifications, deletions, or additions to the rules of the National Wheelchair Softball Association.
  - (1) It shall have the sole authority to implement any such modification, deletions, or additions subject to the approval of the Executive Committee and the membership of the National Wheelchair Softball Association at its annual meeting.
  - (2) All proposals for changes, in playing rules shall be presented in writing to the rules committee prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - (3) Rule modification, deletions, or additions brought before the membership at the annual meeting and approved shall go into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup> following the annual meeting.
- (D) The Classification Committee shall undertake a continual evaluation of the need for classification of Wheelchair Softball competitors, and shall present its findings to the Executive Committee and the Membership of the National Wheelchair Softball Association at the annual meeting. The Classification Committee is directed to make recommendations as to what classes that shall be established, the control of how many of each class shall be permitted on a lineup, and the procedure of classification.

Section 2. The Association may establish other committees for any purpose and provide for their appointment, tenure, and duties.

Section 3. None

Section 4. Meetings. There shall be an annual meeting of this Association during the dates set aside for the conduct of the Association's National Wheelchair Softball Tournament.

- (A) Each conference-member and independent-member team shall be entitled to two votes and may be represented at the annual meeting by one or two accredited delegates.
- (B) Member teams are authorized to send visiting delegates who shall be without voting power and shall not actively participate in the business proceedings of the Association.
- (C) The certification and voting of the delegates shall be conducted as follows.
  - (1) Delegates shall be certified to the Secretary as to who is entitled to represent the member team in question by the proper executive officers identified with such member.
  - (2) No delegate shall represent a member team unless he is actually identified with such member.
  - (3) Whenever the Association votes by roll call, either written or via-voice, on any question, on demand of any delegate, the names of the delegates as they vote shall be checked by the secretary in order to verify the authority of the voter.

(4) Voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

## **ARTTICLE SIX - POST-SEASON COMPETITION**

Section 1. All Post-season Tournaments shall be Double-elimination.

Section 2. League Playoffs. All member teams in good standing shall be eligible to enter into qualifications for the League Playoffs or tournaments leading to the Division and National championships governed by the Association.

Section 3. Structure of League Playoffs. A League Playoff shall consist of Conference(s) and member teams in a geographical area coming together for a tournament that will advance teams to the Divisional Playoff. The teams and conference(s), and the number of teams that will advance for each League Playoff shall be determined by the commissioner and approved by the Executive Committee each year.

Section 4. Division Playoff. A Division Playoff shall consist of the winners of League Playoffs in a geographical area coming together for a tournament that will advance teams to the national Wheelchair Softball Tournament.

Section 5. Structure of Division Playoffs. The number of teams playing and Leagues involved in each Divisional Playoff shall be determined by the Commissioner and approved by the Executive Committee each year.

Section 6. The National Wheelchair Softball Tournament.

- (A) The National Tournament shall consist of a double-elimination tournament with the winner declared as the National Championship Team. There also must be a single elimination, consolation tournament, to be seeded by the position of elimination from the championship tournament. (The latter the elimination the better the seed.)
- (B) The national tournament shall consist of the winning teams of each Division Playoff.
- (C) The National Tournament shall consist of eight (8) or more teams approved by the Commissioner and the Executive Committee.
- (D) The dates designated for the National Wheelchair Softball Tournament shall be between August 15th and September 15th of each year.

Section 7. Determination of Sponsorship for the National Tournament. The determination of the site and sponsor for the annual National Wheelchair Softball Tournament shall be made by the delegates attending the annual meeting from bids submitted in writing by prospective sponsors at least 60 days before the annual meeting of the preceding season in which the Tournament is to be held.

- (A) In the absence of any bids or in the event of non-acceptance of submitted bids, the Executive Committee shall invite and adjudicate additional bids at any time prior to the date set aside for the National Tournament.
- (B) The requirements, duties, and responsibilities of a sponsor for the conduct of a National Tournament are prescribed as follows, the sponsor shall:
  - (1) Arrange for and underwrite the expenses involved in the provision of a suitable game facility and equipment for all games with the optimum number of fields to allow for the Tournament to be carried out most expeditiously.
  - (2) Promote the tournament to the best of its ability.
  - (3) Provide lodging (for those officials traveling over 50 miles) and meals for appointed game officials.
  - (4) Provide lodging and travel for the members of the Executive Committee and the Commissioner of the National Wheelchair Softball Association.
  - (5) Arrange for adequate and suitable space for the conduct of the annual meeting of the National Wheelchair Softball Association.
  - (6) Arrange for suitable transportation services at tournament expense for all participants in the National Tournament, from and to the airport, and for all participants to and from game site and lodging.
  - (7) Pay the game officials at the rate established by the Commissioner.

- (8) Provide two new and unused 16” softballs for each game of the tournament. One new ball to be used to start the game and the second new ball will be used following three outs in the fourth inning. (this will give both teams an at bat with a new ball)
- (9) Provide an official tournament score book which shall become part of the files of the National Wheelchair Softball Association at the completion of the tournament.
- (10) Arrange for the purchase of and engraving of the following trophies and awards for both the Championship and Consolation brackets:

<u>Award</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Min. Size</u>	<u>Charge To</u>
National Championship	1	40”	Tournament
Individual Awards to National Champs (Optional)	15		Tournament
Team Trophy for Second Place	1	38”	Tournament
Individual Awards to Second Place team (Optional)	15		Tournament
Team Trophy for Third Place	1	36”	Tournament
Best Pitcher Award (Plaque or Trophy)	1		Tournament
Best Hitter Award (Plaque or Trophy)	1		Tournament
All- Tournament Team (each position, plaque or trophy)	9		Tournament
Best Quad Plaque or Trophy	1		Tournament.
Lawrence Randell MVP Award Plaque or Trophy	1		Tournament
Hank Quien Sportsmanship Award Plaque or Trophy	1		Tournament
Hall of fame Awards	0-3		NWSA
George Kiefner	0-3		NWSA
Rookie of the Year Plaque or Trophy	1		Tournament

- (11) Print a tournament program which shall include the names and players numbers of all participants in the tournament plus information that is pertinent to wheelchair softball and wheelchair sports which would have general interest and education value, and to recognize those who have helped and supported wheelchair softball.
- (12) Arrange for the typing, printing, and distribution of the statistics of each game of the tournament.
- (13) Arrange for certified personal to perform the duties of officials:  
Two (2) umpires for each tournament game and an official scorer for each game. The credentials of these individuals shall be approved by the commissioner.
- (14) Arrange for the holding of the Post-Tournament Victory Banquet for the presentation of awards and the honoring of members of the National Wheelchair Softball Association.

## **ARTICLE SEVEN - BYLAWS, INTERPRETIONS, EXECUTIVE REGULATIONS, AND RESOLUTIONS**

### **Section 1. Bylaws.**

- (A) The Association may at any annual meeting adopt or amend any Bylaws by a majority vote of the members present and voting, except where a greater majority may be required by the Bylaws
- (B) Except as otherwise specifically set forth in this Constitution, the Bylaws may provide rules and regulations governing:
  - (1) The administration of wheelchair softball by members of the Association.
  - (2) The establishment and control of the games and tournament sponsored by the Association.
  - (3) The procedures for administering and enforcing the provisions of the Bylaws.
  - (4) The adoption of rules of play and competition and the delegation of authority in connection with such to individuals, officers, or committees.
- (C) The enumeration of the forgoing particulars which may be included in the Bylaws shall not limit in any way the general power and authority in the adoption of Bylaws permitted by the first sentence of

this section.

Section 2. Interpretations. The Executive Committee and the Commissioner in the interim between annual meetings are empowered to make interpretations of the Bylaws, which shall be binding after their publication and circulation to the membership. Any member team of the association may request that any such interpretation be passed upon by the membership at the next annual meeting of the Association by making such written request to the Secretary prior to the annual meeting.

- (A) If an interpretation of the Bylaws submitted to the annual meeting fails to receive a majority of those delegates present and voting, it shall thereafter not be binding upon the membership.
- (B) All interpretations approved by the annual meeting shall be incorporated into the Bylaws as Official Interpretations. Other interpretations issued by the Executive Committee or the Commissioner may be included in the Official Interpretations if so designated by the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Executive Regulations. The Executive Committee shall have power to adopt Executive Regulations not inconsistent with the provisions of the Bylaws.

Section 4. Resolutions. Legislation may be enacted through resolution not inconsistent with the Bylaws at any annual meeting by a majority of the delegates present and voting. If a majority of the delegates present and voting so direct, such resolution shall be referred to the entire membership for a mail vote conducted by the Commissioner under conditions approved by the Executive Committee. A two thirds Majority of the members voting in any such mail vote shall be required for enactment of the proposed legislation.

#### **ARTICLE EIGHT - AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended at any annual meeting by a two-thirds majority of the delegates present and voting provided that the proposed amendment shall have been submitted to the Secretary of the Association by July 1st preceding an annual meeting.

Section 2. The Secretary shall mail a copy of the proposed amendment to all members of the Association not later than August 1st before the annual meeting.

Section 3. Unless otherwise specified, all amendments shall become effective on the first day of July following adoption at the annual meeting.