

Suncoast Softball League

Rules of Play

Last Updated: 09/09/2011

1. LINEUPS

All games will be played with a maximum of twelve players in the lineup. This will consist of ten players on the field and the 11th and 12th players as extra hitters. Games may be started with nine or ten players. If a game begins with nine players and a tenth player shows up, then that player may immediately enter the lineup to make 10. However, if a team starts with ten and then an 11th shows up, the 11th player may be used only as a substitute for the original ten players. If a team is requesting a change to their schedule day and/or time of play, changes must be approved by the opposing team and submitted to the League's Commissioner.

2. TIME, TIE, CHAMPION AND RUN RULES

Time: All games are scheduled for seven innings with no new innings starting after 55 minutes.

Tie: In the event a game ends (due to time limit or the completion of 7 innings) in a tie, the game continues using Tampa Bay Tie Breaker Rule (last batted out from previous inning becomes runner on second base & start with NO outs). Continue game normally until there is a winner. The Tampa Bay Tiebreaker Rule will be used as many times as needed until the game is won.

Champion: The Champion in each division will be the team with the best record against other division opponents.

- First tie-breaker is Head to Head Record (team with most wins).
- Second tie-breaker is Head to Head Runs Scored Against.
- Third tie-breaker will be a scheduled Play-Off game at the end of the season.

Run Rules: The SSL will use the following run rules to end game:

- 20 runs after 3 innings
- 15 runs after 4 innings {corrected on 03/23/04}
- 10 runs after 5 innings and beyond. (updated 08/23/2011)

3. COURTESY RUNNERS

One courtesy runner per team per inning is allowed. The courtesy runner will be the last out. If one comes off the bench to pinch run (as opposed to being a courtesy runner), one is considered a substitute and subject to the rules regarding substitution. If the wrong person is sent to courtesy run (i.e., anyone other than the last out or his substitute), the umpire will instruct the right person to take the base (no other penalty). (updated 08/23/2011)

4. **NON-CONTACT RULE**

No player is ever forced to slide. This is a decision that should be made personally, after reviewing your sliding skills with your coach. However, a player must either **slide** to try to avoid hitting the player who already has the ball and is making a legal tag or **otherwise give up as an out. YOU CAN NOT RUN OVER A PLAYER THAT HAS THE BALL!** This could result in the automatic ejection of the committing player. This rule also applies to breaking up a double play. If a runner stays in the baseline and is hit with the ball or prevents the fielder from making a throw to complete the double play by staying in the baseline, then the committing base runner and the batter/ runner shall be called out! This rule applies to double play attempts at any base. **This is an umpire judgment call and conforms to ASA rules. It is simply pointed out here for clarification.**

Teams should teach all players, especially catchers and first base position players where to properly stand when making plays. In the case of first base, a player (pitcher covering the base or first baseman) should never cross the path of a runner while trying to make a play. This is very dangerous and can result in injury. In addition, catchers should not stand on or behind the plate when waiting for a throw to arrive throw in anticipation of a tag play. Catchers should stand in front of the plate, then attempt a tag once they have the ball. Standing on the plate, where the runner has a right to run, can result in needless collisions and injuries.

5. **FAKE TAGS**

Fake tags are illegal. You may hurt someone seriously by doing this. Committing player is subject to ejection. (ASA RULE)

6. **EQUIPMENT**

All legal ASA bats can be used. Metal cleats or metal screws in cleats are illegal. Rubber type cleats are permitted but optional. (ASA RULE)

7. **OPEN WOUNDS**

Any player with an open, bleeding wound **MUST** leave the game immediately until the bleeding has stopped and has been properly bandaged. The game may be halted for a maximum of five minutes to allow the player to comply without penalty. After five minutes, a substitute must take the place of the injured player. If no substitute is available, the injured player will be passed over in the batting lineup with no out being recorded.

8. **FORFEITS**

Any team unable to field nine players at anytime shall be subject to forfeit. The pick-up rule applies here, so long as a team is short during a game due to injury only. If a player is ejected which causes a team to be short, meaning there are no eligible substitutes on their roster from their team, then the game becomes an automatic forfeit.

Teams that forfeit an inter-division game will lose a win for their intra-division record. **{change for Fall 2004 season}**

9. **JURISDICTION / EXCESSIVE OR UNNECESSARY LANGUAGE**

Once games begin, they are under the jurisdiction of the umpire. Umpires shall have the authority to rule on any specific point not covered in these rules. Games may be protested for rule interpretations only. Judgment calls may not be protested. Calls protested must be done at the time of the disagreement or before the end of the game.

Players are asked to limit **excessive or unnecessary language** (if you can't say it on network TV, don't say it here). If language gets out of hand, umpires have the option of issuing a warning to the offending player/team. Further abuses by that team may warrant ejection. Abusive or threatening language directed specifically at another player or an umpire may result in an immediate ejection (see TV rule above). **Players AND umpires** are asked to exercise tolerance when dealing with this issue. (THESE GUIDELINES WERE APPROVED AT A TC / EC MEETING IN SPRING 2002.)

10. OFFICIAL SCORE / LINEUPS

If the umpires are keeping score on the field, teams should match scores after each inning with the umpire to avoid mistakes. **The coach/manager of each team must provide a complete lineup sheet with first initial and last name of each player including substitutes to the umpire and opposing team coach/manager as needed throughout the season. If scorecards are used at the complex where games are being played, it must be filled out as well. The coach/manager's signature is required at game time or that team is subject to forfeit.**

11. UNIFORMS

Teams should wear like colored shirts / hats / shorts. Numbers must be on back of uniform, at least 6" high, two numerical digits only. **THIS IS AN ASA RULE THAT IS USUALLY ENFORCED AT TOURNAMENTS.** We will not tolerate a player's dress that exposes any portion of the buttocks, testicles, breasts for women, underwear, or any other portion of a player's body that may be deemed offensive to other players.

12. PICK-UP PLAYER RULE

Any team present and ready to play at a scheduled game time that has only seven players present may pick-up two players in order not to forfeit that game. Any team present and ready to play at a scheduled game time that has only eight players present may pick-up one player in order not to forfeit that game.

With respect to pick-up player eligibility, this is based on the rating of the player only, not on which team he or she plays. Therefore, a player ranked 11 or below could play on any pick-up team in any division. A player ranked 15 or below could play in a C, B, or A game only. A player ranked 16 or higher can only play in a B or A game. Where inter-division play exists, neither team may pick-up from the higher division; both teams must pick up from the lower division or below. (Example: C plays B or A -- all pickups must be ranked 15 or less. C plays D -- all pickups must be 11 or less.) • The exception to this rule being when a division has less than three teams. In this case, those teams may pick up other players from their own division as well as players from lower divisions.

If a roster member of the team shows up after the beginning of the game, the player or players will be immediately substituted for the pick-up player(s) at the beginning of the next ½ inning. After nine roster team members are fielded, normal substitution rules apply.

The spirit of this rule allows a team who is present, but short one or two players, to play rather than to forfeit as well as providing competition for the opposing team. This rule is not meant as a way to stack a certain team or game. Any team found to be in violation of the spirit and intent of this rule may be brought before the arbitration committee for possible sanctions, including the forfeiting of the game in question.

Teams are encouraged to follow-up during the week to make sure they will have enough players, or make arrangements so that your 1-2 pick players are at the field are ready to play at game time. Permission from the opposing coach is not required, however, if a team feels you are getting a

significant advantage from your pick-up players, the game may be played under protest (if done prior to the first pitch.) The arbitration committee would then hear the protest and make a recommendation to the EC for a penalty. In addition, the spirit and intent of this rule is to encourage recreational players to get more experience, and possibly experience play at the competitive level. To provide as many opportunities as possible, a player is allowed to play in only one game per day as a pick-up player.

A manager or coach may not play as a pick-up player during any time when his or her team is playing a game.

13. **DEPLETED ROSTER RULE**

Qualifying Seasons - Players may be added to a team's roster or moved from roster to roster anytime up to the last pitch on week 5 of any season. At that point rosters are considered locked in for the remainder of the season.

If at any time after week 5 a team loses players and their total rosters falls below 13, players may be added by using the Depleted Roster rule. A team must notify the Commissioner who will review the roster and verify that a player is eligible to join based on the team having a depleted roster. If a team wants to add a player and does not qualify for the depleted roster rule, the issue must be brought before the Arbitration Committee who will make a recommendation to the EC for the final decision.

All other Seasons - New players may be added to a team's roster or moved from roster to roster at any time.

14. **OUT OF THE PARK HOMERUN LIMITS**

- D - All home runs are an out.
- C - 1 home run, others are an out.
- B - 2 home runs, others are an out.

When inter-division games are played, lower team's home run rules apply.

15. **RATINGS PROTEST FEES**

A cash fee of \$100 is required to bring any player to arbitration based on a questionable rating. Each additional question beyond the first that is requested to be reviewed will require an additional \$10. All fees must be paid to the league Treasurer prior to any arbitration meeting taking place. If the protest is ruled in favor of the protesting team/player these fees are returned. A coach/manager can request a ratings review/change of their own players without incurring these fees. These fees are meant for opposing teams/players protesting another player.

16. **RAIN OUTS**

If a game is called due to weather conditions, it is considered a complete game if both teams have finished the 5th inning of play or the home team is up to bat in the 5th inning and they are ahead. Any incomplete game will be replayed from the first inning and a score of 0-0.

17. **NAGAAA WORLD SERIES QUALIFICATIONS - GAMES PLAYED**

A player must have attended and have been able to play in 50% of their qualifying season games in order to be qualified for the NAGAAA World Series. This does not mean that they have to play but only be present and able to play. If a player is present for a game that was started but cancelled due to weather conditions, they will get credit for that game even if they cannot make it

to the makeup.

SUNCOAST SOFTBALL LEAGUE'S SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE INFORMATION

Agent:

Bollinger Insurance (Phone: 800-526-1379)
830 Morris Turnpike
Short Hills, NJ 07078
Policy #3602AH230069

Insured:

Suncoast Softball League, Inc.
PO Box 151492
Tampa, FL 33684