

Ste. Genevieve County
Community Center

2023 Rules & Policies

Updated 4/18/23

GIRLS SOFTBALL RULE

1.0 GOVERNING RULES - Amateur Softball Association rules will govern play with the exceptions covered herein.

1.1 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

League and Age Requirements

Age Categories (based on ages as of July 31st of year playing)

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Coed T-ball | - ages 4 – 5 |
| Rookie Division | - ages 5 – 7 |
| Junior Division | - ages 8 – 10 |
| Senior Division | - ages 11 – 14 |

1.2 TEAMS

- A. Seating – The home team will occupy the first base bench; the visiting team will sit on the third base bench.
- B. Number of coaches – there will be a limit of three (3) coaches per team, one head coach and two (2) assistant coaches during time of draft.

1.3 SCHEDULES

- A. Number of Games -All other division will play starting the last week of May or first week of June and lasting roughly a total of 6 – 8 weeks with a season ending tournament in the Rookie, Junior & Senior Division. Total games played will depend on availability of fields and number of teams. Total games should range in the 7 to 10 games range.
- B. Practices - Due to the limited availability of fields, practice times will be limited. Teams are allowed a total two (2) hours of practice time per week on the fields. Every team will be allowed a chance to schedule practices. No more than three (3) practices can be held in advance.

1.4 PLAYING RULES

- A. Rookie Division – (Coach Pitch)
 - 1. Returning Players – These players must be placed in the common draft system each year.
 - 2. Roster Limit – There will be a maximum of 14 players on a team.
 - 3. Instruction – Several hours should be devoted to teaching the fundamentals of the game before the first game is played.
 - 4. Game Player Limit Defensive Team – Ten players will be on the field. Teams may play with eight players, provided no additional players are present. Players must be placed in standard softball positions on the field, including the pitcher who will stand adjacent to the coach who is pitching. Coaches are permitted on the field with the defensive team.
 - 5. Offensive Team – A Seven (7) run rule per inning will be in effect. An inning shall end when one team has scored 7 runs, regardless of how many outs or players are left on the bases. If a team goes into its last at bat down by more than 7 runs, they still CAN NOT score more than 7 runs that inning. See League Coordinator for more explanations on this rule.
 - 6. **Required Playing Time - Players who do not start the game field will play defense in the second inning. Rotation of players will continue after each inning, using players that have not been replaced in the field. After rotation has been completed, the order will start over.**
 - 7. Regulation Game Length / Time Limits – Games will last one & one quarter hours (1 1/4) or seven (7) innings, whichever comes first. Determination of game length is based of number of games being

played that evening. **No new innings shall be started after the 1 hour and 15-minute time mark.** Three full innings or 40 minutes constitute a complete game in case of rain.

8. Fouls – Same as in conventional softball. Batter is not out of a fouled 3rd strike unless caught by the catcher or hits maximum pitches thrown. Maximum of six pitches may be pitched to a player, unless the 6th pitch is fouled off. Additional pitches may be thrown until the ball is hit into play, the ball is swung at and missed, or the batter does not swing the bat. The latter two will result in automatic outs.
9. Base Running – Runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit. When all defensive players are in proper positions, the coach pitching will call “play ball” and the next batter will take a turn at bat. When a defensive player overthrows the ball in an attempt to make a play on any base, including a throw to the pitcher’s mound, the ball is considered out of play. Base runners **may not** take additional bases. When the last batter is out or ball is thrown home, “Time” shall be called and the inning shall be over. Runners may be allowed to take a maximum of two bases of any given hit. No advancement on overthrows. For example a runner on 1st base can only advance to 3rd base on a hit at most.
10. Championships – There will be a season ending tournament.
11. Infield Fly Rule will not be enforced.
12. Pitching distance ideally around 25 feet. Any coaches closer than 25 from back of the plate and that get hit with a ball will result in a dead ball. This does not count as a strike or towards the 6-pitch limit.
13. Outfields must start in the outfield grass before a ball is hit.

B. Junior

1. Bases 60’ Pitching machine at front of pitching circle.
2. The catcher must wear all appropriate protective gear: protective catcher’s helmet with face mask and throat guard, chest protector and shin guards.
3. A regulation game consists of **7 innings** unless
 - A. Shortened because the home team needs none of its half of the last inning or only a fraction of it to win; or
 - B. **Shortened because an imposed Time Limit** expires; or
 - C. An imposed Mercy (Run) Rule shall be used if applicable, see below, to complete a regulation game when one team’s margin of lead is greater than or equal to the listed run differential in the corresponding listed start inning.
 - D. **LENGTH OF GAME RUN DIFFERENTIAL**
 1. **15 runs after 4 innings**
 2. **10 runs after 5 innings**
 3. In enforcing any part of this rule, the home team shall not bat if they are winning and the mercy requirement is met prior to the bottom half of the listed start inning. Likewise, if the home team is batting and meets the mercy requirement in the bottom half of a listed start inning, the home team shall cease batting at that moment and the game will end.
4. **All games in the Junior Division will be 1 hour and 15 minutes in length. NO new inning shall be started at the completion of the time limit. The before stated time limits are for regular season game in regards to ties. Ties in the post season will be played out until a winner is decided in the next completed inning after the time limit expires.**
5. Whenever a tag play is evident, runners must slide, go around or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and / or catcher. Attempting to jump, leap, or dive over the fielder and / or catcher is not an act of avoiding contact. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.
6. Runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the coach’s discretion.
7. If a game is called due to rain, weather, light failure in the case of a night game or other acts of God **and cannot be resumed, it is a regulation game if:**
 - A. For a scheduled seven (7) inning game, if four (4) innings have been completed or if the home team has scored more runs in three (3) innings or three (3) and a fraction half innings than the visiting team has scored in four (4) complete innings or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half of the fourth (4th) inning to tie the score.

- B. If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more **innings** has been completed beyond four (4) innings, the score will revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half inning if the home team leads but back no further than the fourth (4th) inning.
 - 1. All games that for any reason cannot be declared a regulation game under these rules will be a suspended game. A suspended game when resumed, will resume from the exact point of suspension.
- 8. The catcher must receive the pitch in the catcher's box in a normal softball manner.
- 9. The defensive player listed as pitcher cannot leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit
 - A. The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.
 - B. First Offense: Warning. Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
- 10. The Infield Fly Rule is not in effect at any time.
- 11. The batting order shall constitute all players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.
- 12. Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) position in the batting order will be declared an out each time at bat. A ninth (9th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the batting order as soon as they become available.
 - A. Teams may use free substitution on defense but the batting order must remain the same.
- 13. Bunting is not allowed.
- 14. The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes. See rule below regarding foul tips on 6th pitch and after.
 - A. The 6th pitch foul is not an out or any subsequent foul tips. Any pitches after the 6th pitch or later that or not swung at or swung at and missed will result in an out.
- 15. Runners may not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- 16. Offensive Team – A Seven (7) run rule per inning will be in effect. An inning shall end when one team has scored 7 runs, regardless of how many outs or players are left on the bases. If a team goes into its last at bat down by more than 7 runs, they still CAN NOT score more than 7 runs that inning. See League Coordinator for more explanations on this rule.
- 17. Umpires will call “time” after every play and declare the ball dead. “Time” should be called as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. “Time” does not have to be called by the defense for the **purpose of this rule.**
- 18. No runners shall be allowed to advance on overthrows.
- 19. On balls hit into the outfield, runners can advance until the ball is picked up by the outfielder. The runner is allowed to attempt to advance to the nearest base after this occurs. The ball is still considered live and the runner can still be thrown out.
- 20. Pitching Machine: Then front leg(s) shall be set at a distance at the front of the pitching circle.
- 21. Recommended pitching machine speeds:
 - A. **32 mph**
- 22. Ten (10) defensive players will play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder may not assume an infield position. All outfielders must stay behind the turf infield. Must start play on the red turf.
- 23. **When a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead. The pitch does NOT count towards the 6-pitch rule or as a strike.**
- 24. **Pitcher must stay behind the pitching machine or off to the side. For safety reason the pitcher must not stand in front of the machine for liability issues.**
- 25. **Players shall never sit two innings in a row. Players shall sit out an equal number of times as allowed. For example, a player shall never be sitting a 2nd time, if there are any player in the field that have not yet sat out.**

C. Senior Division Rules

1. Required Playing Time

- A. Girls are not to sit more than one inning at a time. All girls shall sit out an even number of times if possible. (Excluding pitchers & catchers).
- B. Exceptions to the rule may be made in the case of injury, illness, or disciplinary action.
- C. Batting order remains the same throughout the game and substitutions are unlimited for defensive players. All players are to be included in batting order.

2. Maximum/Minimum Numbers of Players

- A. A team will start and finish a game with at least 10 players, however, a team may start and finish a game with 8 players without forfeit, provided there are no other eligible players available to complete the tenth position as soon as the ninth and tenth player is present, she must enter the game. Teams that are playing with ten players may continue with nine, or eight players in case of injury, illness, disciplinary action, or ejection with an out being declared for each offensive position.
- B. A legal pitch must have an arc as follows:
 - 1. Senior Division – Fast pitch is suggested but not required. Girls that don't fast pitch must throw a pitch that is no higher than 6' at its highest point.
- C. Pitching technique must conform to ASA rules, for instance a pitcher must have both feet on the rubber to start the pitch and is not allowed to step back if fast pitching.
- D. In the event of more than 4 walks per inning, the hitting teams coach will come in and pitch the remaining inning. Balls & strikes will not be called and the 6-pitch rule will be enforced similar to Rookie/Junior Divisions.
- E. Infield Fly Rule will not be enforced in the Senior Division
- F. Hit Batter (kid pitching only)
 - 1. Batter will be awarded first base if hit by a pitch unless:
 - a. They are over the strike zone when hit and pitch would have been called strike
 - i. Play is called dead and batter shall be charged a strike. No strikeout shall result from a 3rd strike of this manner. No advancement to first base.

3. Length of Games

- A. Senior Division games will last one hour 45 minutes or one or seven (7) innings, whichever comes first. Determination of game length is based on number of games being played that evening. However, if time expires during an incomplete inning, the inning will be completed unless the home team has the lead and visitors completed their turn at bat. If a team is leading its opponent by 10 runs after five innings (four and a half with the home team winning) or 15 runs after 4 innings (three and a half with the home team winning), the game will be terminated and the team with the most runs will be declared the winner.
 - 1. Innings that finish with either the home team ahead at the end of the half inning or the completion of a full inning after the 1 hour 45-minute mark shall be considered a finished game. **NO NEW INNINGS AFTER 1 HOUR 45 MINUTES.**
- B. Grace Period – There will be no grace period. Teams should be at the game site 15 minutes before game time. The second game will start as soon after the first as possible, as agreed upon by both coaches, but no later than the time printed on the official schedule.
- C. Balls & Strikes – Players start with a 0 – 0 count.

- D. Time Considerations for Injuries – In the event of an injury to a player, the umpire will allow only the time he deems necessary for the safe removal of the player. This amount of time will be added to the time limit of the game and the umpire will immediately inform each manager of the new time limit.
- E. A regulation game will be declared if cancelled after 4 ½ innings have been completed (with home team ahead) or 5 innings or 40 minutes have expired with the home team receiving the last at bat if necessary.
 - 1. Exception – the above A.S.A. rule will be observed during tournament games however the 40-minute requirement will not be in effect.
- F. Cancellation of Games after Start – After a game has started, the weather and field conditions will be judged by the umpires. If a game is halted due to rain or other adverse conditions, teams must not leave the park for 15 minutes. Umpires will make a definite decision whether the game will be continued or canceled. If the umpires decide to continue the game and either of the teams have left or are not ready to play at the end of 15-minute period, the team at fault will forfeit. Games will not be permitted during a drizzling rain which, in the opinion of the umpire or SGCCC officials, will be unsafe or could affect the lights.
- G. Infield – No infield pre-game practice will be allowed.
- H. A courtesy runner can be used for the catcher. Last batter to record an out is substituted for the catcher. The catcher must be the player that catches next inning.
- I. Batting more than once thru the line up is allowed.
- J. Runners are allowed to continue running until the pitcher has the ball around the pitching mound.
- K. Third foul is not an out, unless caught by catcher.
- L. NO stealing is allowed in Senior Division. Players are allowed to “hop” off the base once a pitch has been released from the pitcher’s hand.
- M. Bunting is allowed if kids are pitching.
- N. A Seven (7) run rule per inning will be in effect. An inning shall end when one team has scored 7 runs, regardless of how many outs or players are left on the bases. If a team goes into its last at bat down by more than 7 runs, they still CAN NOT score more than 7 runs that inning. See League Coordinator for more explanations on this rule.

1.5 EQUIPMENT

- A. Shoes – Metal spikes may not be worn in any league. Girls must wear tennis shoes or hard rubber molded cleats. Players will not be allowed to play barefoot.
- B. Protective Equipment – Catchers in all girls’ leagues must wear face masks, chest protectors and catchers’ helmets during all games and practices. Offensive helmets are required and should fit the head snug.
- C. Balls – Ten-inch balls will be used for Mini and Rookie Divisions. Eleven-inch balls will be used for Junior Division. Twelve-inch balls will be used for Senior Division.
- D. Shirts – Players shall wear the game uniform supplied by the league.

1.6 PLAYING FIELDS

- A. Rain – The Sainte Genevieve County Community Center cannot assume the responsibility of notifying all managers about the condition of playing fields. Managers of the teams involved may call the SGCCC for any available information. Players are requested to call their managers and not the department. Games will not be canceled because of threatening weather.

1.7 PITCHING DISTANCE

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| Rookie Division | Ideally 25' but more likely 15' |
| Junior Division | Machine set at front of pitching circle. |
| Senior Division | 40' |

1.8 BASE DISTANCE

- A. All base path distances shall be 60 feet.

1.9 SCOREKEEPING

- A. Scores – Umpires will be required to record the official score of runs on provided game card after each inning.
- B. Scorebook – The home team in the Junior, & Senior Divisions will be required to keep the official score book. The official scorekeeper is instructed to ask the umpire for the starting time and notify the visiting scorekeeper and write the time in the scorebook. It is the visiting scorekeeper's responsibility to check with the official scorekeeper after each half inning, notifying umpire immediately of any discrepancies.
 - a. Scores will be kept in the Mini & Rookie Division. Both teams will be required to keep score and check with one another after each inning to verify the score. Please report these scores back to the League Coordinator.

2.0 PROTESTS AND PENALTIES

- A. Documentation – Protests, applications, agreements, suggestions, and any other matters brought to the attention of the SGCCC, must be presented in writing with the signature of the writer.
- B. Protests – Only coaches are allowed to submit protests. Any coach who protests an umpire's interpretation of a rule must notify the umpire immediately at the time of the incident. The umpire will then announce to both managers that the game is being played under protest. All statistics will be recorded by the umpire in the home team scorebook and on the official game scorecard. No protests will be accepted at the conclusion of the game after both teams leave the field.

The protesting coach must notify the SGCCC, in writing, within two working days after the protested game. The complete facts and the rules to cover the protest must be stated at this time. A fee of \$30.00 must accompany each protest. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be returned. If the protest is overruled, the fee will be deposited into the general fund of the SGCCC.

- C. Protest Decisions – The SGCCC staff will make the final decision on all protests.
- D. Tournament – Protests during all tournament games will be decided before the next pitch by the protest committee consisting of athletic staff and the umpire for the game under protest.