



SANDY SPRINGS YOUTH SPORTS
SOFTBALL - JUNIOR LEAGUE
LOCAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Version: March 2, 2023

The following are the basic rules needed by the coaches. All play is based on USA Softball rules with the exceptions provided in these alternate rules. While many USA rules are contained herein, this should not be construed as a substitute for the USA Rules, which each coach is expected to read and adhere to.

- I. Good sportsmanship should be displayed by coaches and players at all times. Upon conclusion of the game the players and coaches should shake hands, or exchange a “fist bump,” and say “good game” to the opponent, and vacate the field so that the next scheduled game can begin on time.
- II. **Pitching Limits:** Pitchers may only pitch twelve outs per game (please see exception listed in **XIII-a/b-iii**).
- III. **Player Rotations:** All players available for a game shall play at least 1 full inning in an infield position (P, C, 1B, 2B, SS, 3B) during the first 4 innings of the game. (Applies for all regular season and all playoff games.)
- IV. **Game Duration:**
 - a. Maximum of 6 innings (except for Championship Round).
 - b. For all games except Championship round, in the event that the maximum innings cannot be completed within the first 80 minutes of the game, no new inning will begin after 80 minutes of playing time. Any innings that are in progress at the 80-minute mark will be played to their completion.
 - c. All innings must be played to conclusion unless the home team is ahead in the bottom half of the inning and game time has expired.
 - d. No tiebreaker will be used during regular season games: in the regular season games tied at the end of regulation game will be considered ties.
- V. **Inning Limits:** At the start of the game each inning will have a three-run maximum until one of the following occurs: the game enters the 4th inning; or, the game time reaches 60 minutes. Thereafter each inning will have an eight-run maximum. **Note: Each game must have an open inning.** Runs in excess of the specified maximum number for a half inning are not to be scored (even in the case of over-the-fence home runs and ground rule doubles).
- VI. **Weather:** Regular season games shortened by weather will be a complete game after four innings of play, or three and a half innings of play if the home team is ahead. Incomplete

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games will be rescheduled to a later date and resume at the exact point where play was stopped using the home team's score book.

VII. **Mercy rule:** A twelve-run lead at the end of the 4th inning, or a nine-run lead after the end of the 5th inning shall constitute a complete game regardless of time.

VIII. **Equipment**

- a. In both practice and games, catchers must wear the protective gear required by USA softball.
- b. Batting helmets shall be worn by batters, on deck batters, all base runners and player base coaches, both in games and in practices, and must have a face mask.
- c. All infielders must wear an approved fielders' face mask while playing in the infield.
- d. No metal cleats may be used under any circumstances. If a player is observed to be wearing metal cleats they must be removed or the player cannot continue to play.
- e. Bats must conform to the [rules set forward](#) by the National Federation of State High School Associations.

IX. **Player numbers and substitutions**

- a. Up to 10 players play defensively, with up to 4 in the outfield and 6 in the infield. All players will bat without regard to defensive line-up.
- b. A team may use call-ups from Majors (10U) in order to get to 9 total players.
- c. Players who arrive late to games should play and shall be inserted at the end of the batting order.
- d. If a team for any reason falls below 8 players during a game, an out will be recorded when the vacant position in the batting order is scheduled to bat.
- e. **Courtesy Runner** - In order to speed the game, the offensive coach may substitute a base runner for the pitcher or catcher of record, with the batter that made the last out or is the most recent player to bat if no outs. This is to allow pitcher/catcher to prepare for the next half-inning.

X. **Player Call Ups:** Called up players are placed at the end of the batting lineup and are subject to the same player rotation rules as all other players. In the event the original player(s) show up after the game has begun, the called-up players and original players should both play in the game.

XI. **Game Procedures/ Responsibilities**

- a. The Visiting Team is responsible for keeping the score on the electronic, physical scoreboard via the SingleScore app.
- b. The Visiting Team for the last game of the day on each field is responsible for turning off the scoreboard. The power switch is at the scoreboard.
- c. The home team must provide an official scorekeeper/ keep a book.
- d. All teams must be ready for play at the scheduled starting time. Failure to be ready to play will result in forfeiture.
 - i. All games start on the first pitch according to USA rules unless a grace period is needed for lack of players.

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- ii. If a team does not have the minimum required players, then that team will have a 10-minute grace period. The game clock starts when the game was scheduled to begin.
- iii. The official starting time shall be determined and announced by the home-plate umpire.
- iv. If multiple games are scheduled for the same day, each subsequent game shall start ten minutes after the previous game has been completed or the scheduled starting time, whichever is later

XII. Protests for Misinterpretation of a Rule

- a. The umpires on the field have authority over game play. Judgment calls are not to be questioned (this is per USA softball rules!). Remember the umpires are using their best judgment when making calls. When challenging an umpire, be thoughtful and considerate. Only the head coach may challenge an umpire's call. Head coaches can ask umpires for clarification, explanation, and, if there is more than one umpire at a game, can request that one umpire seek the other's input.
- b. For non-playoff games, there are no protests allowed. If a coach believes an umpire has interpreted a rule incorrectly, then that coach should notify their league director after the game.
- c. In playoff play, protests are allowed **ONLY FOR QUESTIONS REGARDING INTERPRETATION OF LOCAL PLAYING RULES**. If a coach believes that the interpretation by an umpire of a local rule is incorrect then he shall inform the umpire that he is placing the game under protest. There is a \$20 fee to protest a ruling (this is not returned, regardless of outcome). Prior to resuming play, the protest will be ruled on by the league director, or, if the league director is not present, the league director's designee. This ruling will be on the correct interpretation of the local rule only – it cannot overrule the judgment of the umpire on what actually occurred in the play. Therefore, the LD or LD's designee need not have seen the play, and will rely on the umpire's description of what happened on the field to provide the correct interpretation of the local playing rule. If the ruling is found in favor of the team that protested, the game shall resume from the point of protest.

XIII. Playoff Rules

a. Championship Round

- i. A Best-of-Five series will be played to determine the Playoff Champion.
- ii. The team with the best record in games between the SSYS teams will be the #1 seed. In the event that is a tie, then the first tiebreaker will be record against other teams (NYO, Murphey Candler, Roswell) and second tiebreaker will be best run differential in games between the SSYS teams.
- iii. The #1 seed will serve as the home team for odd numbered games and the #2 seed will serve as the home team for the even numbered games.
- iv. Time limit is 90 minutes. Open inning at 60 minutes or after 3 innings, whichever occurs first.

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- v. Pitchers may still only pitch twelve outs per game. **HOWEVER** - If a game goes to a 7th inning, each player will get an additional 3 outs to pitch. (No more than 15 outs can be pitched in a game that goes longer than 7 innings.)
- vi. If a game in the Championship round of the playoffs is tied at the end of regulation time and less than 6 innings have been played, one full extra inning will be played. Should the game be tied after that inning, a tiebreaker will be played to break the tie per USA Rules. Starting with the first extra inning and for each half inning thereafter the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning placed on second base. The game shall be continued until one side has scored more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning or until the team second at bat has scored more runs in their half of the inning before the third out is made. If time has expired and 6 innings have been completed, then the tiebreaker inning will be the 7th inning.
- vii. Playoff and championship games shortened by weather that would otherwise be considered a complete game during the regular season will be resumed at a later date.