

North County Senior Softball-Competitive Division

Supplemental Rules

(Final Rules as revised on 4/01/2021)

The North County Senior Softball-Competitive Division (NCSS-CD) league operates in observance of the SSUSA rules governing senior softball. Contained herein are exceptions or restatements of the common rules that reflect customary play observances within NCSS-CD.

Section 001: Manager Responsibilities. Each team is assigned a Manager for each season of play. Selection is on a volunteer basis. Managerial responsibilities include:

1. Participating with other Managers in the fair selection of each team prior to the start of the next season.
 - a. The selection process begins with skill-balanced placement of players on teams by random and sequential assignment to rosters based on player ratings. A subset of essential positions and Tuesday/Thursday players are randomly assigned separately. The highest rated players are assigned first.
 - b. After enough players are distributed to comprise a full team, Managers are assigned teams by drawing a team number (in the blind) out of a receptacle.
 - c. The selection process ends with lower rated players drafted on a rotating basis by each Manager. Each Manager determines their own competitive needs and drafts (or decides not to draft) accordingly. If possible, the draft pool shall include enough players that each Manager shall have the opportunity to draft at least 2 players but not more than 3 players.
 - d. Players not selected by the above process will be placed in an undrafted pool, which the Commissioner may tap during the season for individual games or for roster additions.

2. Participate with other Managers in evaluating teams for parity after completion of the first round of games. If necessary, players will be redistributed in a way most likely to achieve team balance within the league. Managers will use the following procedures in making re-balancing decisions:
 - a. New players and inactive players who ask for team placement should be identified to all Managers before meeting to make rebalancing decisions.
 - b. Managers should review each roster, including their own team roster, to identify possible players that may be moved for placement with needy teams.
 - c. Managers should identify players on their teams who have only minimally attended the first round of games and who, therefore, may be more easily moved to achieve parity.
 - d. Managers should focus on what is best for league parity rather than their own competitive team interests.
 - e. New and otherwise unassigned players indicating intent to play during the season shall be offered first to the team most in need and with the overall purpose of enhancing team and league parity.
 - f. New players shall be added to the league after game evaluation and approval of at least two Managers.

3. Notify players prior to the first game, and ensure they have the season schedule and are available to play for the season. If unavailable, notify the league Commissioner.
4. Notify players of schedule changes or cancellations due to rain, holiday or tournaments. If players have questions about whether play will occur, they should contact their Manager.
5. When home team, place the field equipment on the field 45 minutes prior to game time. The equipment includes bases, home plate mat, score Board, pitching screen, marking the 5-foot line behind the pitching rubber and place the score line mat in position. Ensure all equipment is returned to the maintenance shed following the conclusion of play.
6. Keep an accurate score book and report the score to the league secretary following the conclusion of play. The score book is provided by NCSS-CD.
7. All players shall be assigned to bat in the lineup for the entire game. Managers should assign defensive positions in such a way that all players participate at least to some minimal degree in the defensive game. The Manager has complete discretion in this matter based upon his assessment of the player's relative skill and ability to play a particular defensive position, the Manager's desire to enhance the team's competitive level of play, and such other factors as the Manager determines appropriate in a particular game or circumstance. Since this is a competitive league, there is no guarantee of any specific minimum number of innings that must be offered to any player.
8. Assign a batting order and ensure on-deck players are prepared to bat, to avoid delay.
9. Manage the game in such a way as to avoid unnecessary game delay.
10. Resolve any rule dispute directly with the umpire. Only the Manager can dispute a call. All other players must bring the dispute to the attention of their Manager, who will then elect, in his sole discretion, whether to press the matter with the umpire, or proceed with normal play.
11. Ensure players conform to player conduct requirements. Games must be played with respect for all players, the umpires and the sport.
12. In cases where player misconduct cannot be subdued and controlled, the Manager has the authority to eject the player from the game in the interest of good sportsmanship and the integrity of the game. Any consideration of suspension or banishment for more than one game must be brought to the league Commissioner for consideration. A player can be suspended or banished only upon the unanimous consent of the league Board.
13. Strive to know the SSUSA and NCSS-CD supplemental softball rules in order to properly manage a game.
14. Provide one new game ball (ROCK) and one good used ball for each game, such balls to be provided to the Manager by the NCSS-CD Commissioner.
15. Deliver the batting practice balls to each game.
16. Bring a first aid kit to each game, including ice packs. The first aid kits are provided by NCSS-CD.
17. The Managers, Commissioner, League Secretary, and Player Representative (all if not also a Manager) comprise the league Board and are responsible for league rules. The persons serve on a voluntary basis without term limits. If a league player should desire to hold one of the positions above, he may voluntarily submit his name to the Commissioner. The league Board will determine by majority vote whether a league officer or Manager change is in the best interest of the league.

Section 002: Player Conduct. The following player conduct rules are provided to ensure the highest level of respect for each player, Manager, umpire and the game of softball. The league prospers when new players seek to join NCSS-CD based upon its competitiveness and reputation for good sportsmanship and fair play. All competitive players above 50 years of age are invited to apply. An

atmosphere of fairness, respect and collegiality are the foundation to a quality league. NCSS-CD is not comprised of tournament teams, rather players of varying talents and with a wide age distribution. As such, patience and understanding are required of all players. Member players must observe good sportsmanship and the following personal conduct rules:

- 1) Pay appropriate league fees when requested.
- 2) When you commit to play for a team, use best efforts to make all games. It is understood that vacations, medical emergencies, work and family commitments etc. will sometimes interfere with a player's ability to attend each scheduled game. Notify your Manager by email, text or phone call as soon as you learn of a game conflict, or of your request to play in games for which you are not scheduled so he can adjust his lineup before arriving at the game.
- 3) Arrive at each game at a minimum of 30 minutes prior to game time to allow for the Managers and player representative to ascertain team strength and create or modify a player schedule. This will allow for pregame batting practice and avoid game start delays.
- 4) Provide your own bat and glove during play. Use of other player equipment diminishes the life of that equipment for that player. Use of another player's equipment is permitted but discouraged.
- 5) Never touch, shove, threaten, hit or verbally abuse another player, Manager or umpire. Such action will result in ejection, suspension or banishment.
- 6) Do not argue calls with the umpire, players or Managers. If you disagree with a call, make it known to your Manager only. In your Manager's sole discretion, he may choose to address the matter with the umpire or reject pressing the matter in the interest of avoiding unnecessary game delay. Respect the final decision.
- 7) Cooperate with the requests from your Manager. If you object to an action or activity, first address it with your Manager. If unsatisfied, you may address the matter with the league Commissioner.
- 8) Wear the assigned jerseys for each game. Contrasting jerseys assist in player identification when executing a play and avoid confusion. It also adds a level of credibility to the quality of the NCSS-CD league. Failure to wear the assigned jersey in a game is not a basis to prohibit a player from playing but is discouraged.
- 9) When the home team, assist in the placement of the field equipment on the field. Following the game's conclusion, assist in the return of the field equipment to storage.
- 10) Rough tactics during play is prohibited. Player safety supersedes all other goals of the game.
- 11) Throwing of a bat out of frustration is prohibited.
- 12) When taking pregame batting practice, you must also participate in manning the ball-bucket and field batted balls.

Section 003: Bats. All senior softball bats stamped with SSUSA approval or otherwise approved under SSUSA rules are authorized for use. Wood bats are not authorized. Altered bats, including rolled bats, are prohibited by SSUSA rules for the safety of all and to ensure standards of fair play. Therefore, any player who uses an altered or unauthorized bat during any practice or game will be suspended from participation in any NCSS-CD event for one year and including the next scheduled league tournament. Any player who refuses to surrender a questioned bat for review or for testing will be suspended for two years. Any Manager or Umpire may question and review a bat for compliance with this rule.

Section 004: Player Trading. At any time during a season, Managers may agree to trade players. Notification of the trade is required to be made to the league Commissioner so that accurate player rosters can be maintained. Following approval of the trade, it is the Manager's responsibility to notify the affected players regarding the trade.

Section 005: Bases.

- 1) Bases are set at 70 feet.
- 2) Orange base:
 - a) Runners must run to the orange base at first base unless the ball is hit to the outfield and there is no play at first. In such an instance, the first baseman must yield the base path to the runner, or obstruction will result in the awarding of the next base.
 - b) When making a defensive play at first base, only the white bag is in play. If the first baseman only touches the orange base when attempting a force out, the runner will be safe.
- 3) On rainy days, in the interest of safety, and upon concurrence of both Managers, an exception to runners touching each base can be implemented. In such cases, the runner need only touch the ground near the base.
- 4) When a home run is hit and the ball leaves the field, the runners are not required to advance to the next base but can return to their dugout. The batter who hit the home run is allowed to “hit and sit,” and is not required to touch first base.
- 5) For safety, any runner on first or third base may step off of the base and out of play until the batter strikes the ball. When the ball is in play, the runner must return to touch the base before proceeding to the next base.
- 6) The commit line is marked 30 feet from home plate.

Section 006: Pitching screen.

- 1) The pitching screen is placed 10 feet in front of the pitching rubber.
- 2) The pitching screen may be placed partially to the side of the rubber, but no more than half the rubber can be exposed to the batter.
- 3) Batters start with a 1-1 count and are allowed 3 balls and 2 strikes, plus a one-time courtesy foul (“waste foul”) instead of strike 3. Batted balls that strike the pitching screen are strikes and dead balls. If the pitching screen is hit on the third strike, the batter is allowed the one-time courtesy foul (“waste foul”).
- 4) For purposes of defensive play, the pitching screen is in play.
- 5) When releasing the ball, the pitcher’s pivot foot must remain simultaneously in contact with the pitcher's box which extends from the pitching rubber to 5 feet behind the pitching rubber.
- 6) Pitch height min/max limit is 6-12 feet. Deviations will be called illegal by the umpire only.
- 7) Any pitch either over the screen, or to the side, while the pitcher is within the pitcher's box, may be called illegal for excessive speed. Such call is within the sole discretion of the home plate umpire.

Section 007: Game Forfeiture.

- 1) At the “beginning” of the game, a team must field a minimum of eight originally assigned players or the game will result in forfeiture. Thereafter, substitutes will be added, and the game will be played as a pickup game.
- 2) Should the team begin a game with eight original players, and thereafter fall below eight players, the game will still be counted.
- 3) Pick-up games are scheduled at the discretion of the league Board. Pick-up games may be announced when games are in conflict with regional softball tournaments resulting in loss of league players. A pick-up game will also follow in a game that has already been forfeited. If both teams head-to-head have fewer than eight players, then both teams forfeit.

Section 008: Substitute Runners. In consideration of the wide age disparity within NCSS-CD the following substitute runner rules are observed:

- 1) Any player can run for another player for any reason, medical or tactical.
- 2) The same player can only substitute run once in an inning.
- 3) If a player desires to run for himself, he is allowed to do so. Managers cannot appoint a substitute runner over the objection of the player who reached base safely.
- 4) If a player has a pinch runner in an inning, that same player cannot thereafter pinch run for another person.
- 5) If a player's turn to bat comes up while he is a substitute player, the player is not out, and can be replaced with another substitute runner in order to take his place at bat.

Section 009: Home Runs. Each team is afforded three “out of the park” home runs. After each team has hit three home runs, each team is permitted to go “one up.” If the other team does not hit another home run, additional home runs are considered walks, and runners advance only one base when forced.

Section 010: Slide or Avoid. The purpose of this rule is to ensure the safety of all players.

- 1) When attempting to advance a base during a play, runners must slide to the bag or avoid collision with the baseman by yielding the base line.
- 2) When yielding the base line, the runner should veer out of the base line to permit the defensive player to make an unobstructed throw to another base.
- 3) When sliding, the runner should make all attempts to avoid colliding with the defensive player and focus on contacting the base only.
- 4) At no time is “taking out” the defensive player permitted. Should the runner enter the base standing-up and collide with the fielder or having interfered with the catch or throw by failing to veer out of the base path, in the sole discretion of the umpire, both the runner and the batter are out. Incidental limited touching that does not interfere in any way with the play or present potential harm to the players is not contemplated by this rule. The runner has a right to the base but must attain it in a way that does not interfere with the defensive player or increase risk of injury.
- 5) In the event of a force out play, should the runner veer to avoid collision with the defender and the defender thereafter fail to cleanly field the ball, the base may be awarded to the runner if in the sole discretion of the umpire, the base would have been safely attained but for the runner veering away.
- 6) In the event that the ball, defensive player and runner get to the base simultaneously, the runner should slide to avoid running into the defensive player. This rule is enforced in the sole discretion of the umpire with consultation with the Managers from each team.

Section 011: Flip-Flop. NCSS-CD plays nine inning softball games. If after eight complete innings are played, the home team is ten or more runs down, the game will automatically flip-flop. The visiting team will remain in the field, and the home team will bat in its ninth inning. Should they fail to take the lead, the game will result in a win for the visiting team.

Section 012: Tie Game. In the event of a tie after nine innings, each team is awarded ½ point.

Section 013: Substitute Players. Should a team have eight, but fewer than eleven players, substitutes can be added from walk-ons or shared from teams with excessive available players, subject to the

following guidelines:

Definitions:

- a) **Walk-on Player:** a substitute player not a member of the league who participates for a short time period.
 - b) **Shared Player:** a substitute assigned from a team that has an excess number of players and loaned to a team that is short of players for that game.
- 1) The game goal is to field eleven players each inning on defense. If both teams have 11 or more players, each team must play 11 players.
 - 2) In an attempt to field eleven players, Managers shall first coordinate with the player representative to add substitutes to their team. Substitute players will bat last.
 - 3) To the greatest extent practicable, substitutes should come from teams not in direct competition.
 - 4) When a team(s) has (have) an excess of players, while another team not in direct competition is short, the Manager(s) with excess players will share a player(s) as needed and have the player(s) assigned as a substitute to the short team. The sharing of a player shall be coordinated through the player representative. The Manager(s) may not give his most or least talented player to another team. He is a full player for the purposes of that game.
 - 5) When a team has an excess of players, while another team in direct competition is short, the Manager with excess players will share a player or players as a substitute to the short team. The Manager may share any player to a team in direct competition. He is a full player for the purposes of that game.
 - 6) When there are not enough players to field two teams in direct competition to eleven, a team in direct competition may borrow a “defensive player only” from his competition. In such cases, for example, a team may borrow a catcher from the team they are playing, but that player does not bat for the team doing the borrowing, rather, he continues to bat for his original team.
 - 7) Any non-rostered player must be identified to the opposing Manager prior to commencement of the game.

Section 014 Balancing Teams In Direct Competition

If the difference between the number of players on teams in direct competition with each other is more than 2 and both teams have at least 11 defensive players, then a player may still be sent from one team to the other, but only if each Manager agrees to the player(s) being sent. No Manager is required to agree to the receipt of any players. A Manager with the most players should offer a high rated player(s) to induce the possibility of agreement if he wants the teams to play with a more similar number of players.

Section 015: Out of Bounds. Out of bounds lines are derived from the base fence lines. Should the fence line not go all the way to the outfield fence, and imaginary line is to be drawn. Balls hit initially fair which later roll out of bounds result in the batter and runners advancing two bases only. This rule is invoked at the time the ball is hit, not where the runners were when the ball went out of bounds. Fly balls are not in play if fielded out of bounds. Any balls caught out of bounds in the air are not outs, but foul balls.

Section 016: Intentional Walks. Intentional walks can only occur during the eighth or ninth inning. The same person cannot be walked more than once per game. More than one intentional walk is permitted in the eighth or ninth inning, but not to the same player that has previously been intentionally walked.

Section 017: Pregame Warm-up. To avoid undue game delay, pregame warm-ups should be limited to the first inning only. As player substitutes may be necessary during the course of a game, this rule is subject to the discretion of the team Manager, in his sole discretion.

Section 018: Scoring. When scoring, a runner who passes through the batter's box or touches the home plate mat is ruled out. A runner must have his foot or other part of his body down on or past the home plate scoring line (or mat that designates the scoring line) in order to score safely. When making a play at home, the defensive player can only record an out by touching the home plate mat, while in possession of the ball, before the runner crosses the home plate scoring line. Tagging a player at home is not permitted--the runner will be ruled safe. Should the runner not cross the commit line, but be caught in a pickle, the defensive player at home can run the player back towards third and place a tag on him for the out.

Section 019: Compressing a player out of the line-up. From time to time, a team will lose a player during a game as the result of injury, or prior commitment that requires the player to leave early. In such instances, when that player's turn at bat comes up, it is not recorded as an out. Rather, the next batter in order bats as normal. In no case can a player be compressed out of a lineup to create an advantage to a team. Should such an action occur, the omitted batter is recorded as an out. If a player is added to replace a compressed player, the added player will bat in the place of the compressed player. The added player can play any position assigned by the Manager, in his sole discretion. The added player must be similar in skill ranking (within one ranking up or down), or they cannot be added for the compressed player.

Section 020: Fair ball. Any ball (grounder or fly) that is touched while the "ball" is in fair territory is a fair ball, even if it goes foul after being touched. For the purpose of this rule, it does not matter whether the player who touched the ball was in fair or foul territory. The orange base is "not" in fair territory. For a grounder to be fair, it must cross the white base while in fair territory.

Section 021: Tuesday and Thursday Players. Some players sign-up to play only one game a week. Notwithstanding, those players are team members and are permitted to play as frequently as they desire, even if it is on a day they are not slotted to play, provided that, these players should give advance notice pursuant to Section 002(2) above to their Manager that they want to play on an unscheduled day.

Section 022: Time out. A time out occurs when the umpire's states "time out," or when the ball is secured by an infielder and in the discretion of the umpire, there is no play to be made on a runner.

Section 023: Clean hit rule. Prior to the beginning of each game, Managers may agree that certain players may not be thrown out at first base by an outfielder. If no agreement is reached, all players can be thrown out at first base by an outfielder with the opportunity.

Section 024: Partial Participation. Due to a valid medical purpose, any player can participate on a partial basis. A player may field or bat only. This rule cannot be used to gain tactical advantage. Managers are encouraged to discuss any such player limitations prior to the game.

Section 025: Official score. As our games do not have an official scorekeeper, it is the responsibility of each Manager to keep an accurate score as the game progresses. This should be confirmed at the top and bottom of each inning. From time to time an error is made by a team's scorekeeper, failing to record a run. If the error is identified after the first pitch is made to the opposing team in their next at

bat, the run may not be added to the team's score.

Section 026: Season Champion. The season champion is determined at the end of the regular season by the team with the highest winning percentage. Ties will be broken by which team won more games in head-to-head competition. If ties still exist, each team will be identified as a co-champion. If a team has played fewer games than others, no make-up games are authorized.

Section 027: Appeal. The home plate umpire will make a call unless he is not able to. In that event, and in his sole discretion, the umpire may appeal to a base coach to make the call. A player or Manager may not demand the umpire appeal the call to a base coach.