

Cherokee Senior Softball Association

Rules of Play

1. Rules: Current ASA Slow Pitch, ISA Slow Pitch and Cherokee Recreation and Parks Authority rules and regulations will govern all games, except when overridden by any CSSA rule listed below:

2. Discussing Rules With Umpires: The team manager or his assistant is the only person to discuss rule interpretations with the umpire(s). As a courtesy, the Umpire will usually give a brief explanation of the call. In the event of a dispute, the Park Supervisor on duty, together with the Commissioner of the CSSA (or another CSSA Officer or League Director in the Commissioner's absence), will make the final decision.

3. Forfeitures: A team must have a minimum of eight (8) roster players to start or continue a game. If the eight roster players are not present, a forfeiture will be recorded and the win given to the opposing team. If the situation arises whereby both scheduled teams do not have the required eight (8) roster players present to start the game, both teams will have a loss recorded for that game.

4. Double Bag: A double bag shall be used at first base. The runner shall use the outside bag (usually orange in color) and the infielder uses the inside bag whenever a force play is being made on the runner (except when the runner is returning to the bag after a caught fly ball out). In the case of an overthrow, the fielder may use the outside bag and the runner may use the inside bag without penalty.

5. Alternate Home Plate: An alternate home plate shall be placed eight (8) feet in foul territory, directly in line with the first base foul line, but on the third base side of the normal home plate. To prevent injuries from tag plays, all plays at home plate are force plays! The defensive player need only catch the ball while in contact with the normal home plate, or make contact with the normal home plate while in possession of the ball before the runner makes contact with the alternate home plate to record an out of that runner. If the defensive player merely tags the runner after the runner has passed the commitment line, it is not recorded as an out of that runner and the runner is deemed safe at home plate.

6. Commitment Line: A chalk line shall be drawn across the third base foul line approximately thirty-three (33) feet from the normal home plate. When a runner crosses this commitment line, he must continue on to the alternate home plate or be recorded as an out if he attempts to return back across the commitment line toward third base.

7. Batting Order: Except when a League rule has been duly adopted to the contrary, all team members present will bat in the batting order whether they are playing a defensive position or not. When a player is inserted into a defensive position in lieu of another teammate, the player maintains the same position in the batting order that he originally held.

8. Injured Player: If a player becomes injured during the course of a game and needs to leave the game because of such injury, the injury must first be confirmed by agreement of the injured player's manager with the opposing team's manager. Thereafter, the following conditions will apply:

The injured player will be removed from his team's lineup and will not be allowed to return to the game.

The injured player's manager will inform the umpire and the scorekeeper of the injured player's removal from the lineup.

When the injured player's turn at bat arrives, it will be skipped over and an "out" will not be recorded.

9. Late Players: At the time the manager fills out his team's lineup sheet, only those players who have actually arrived at the field will be listed in the batting order. Changes to the lineup sheet shall not be permitted after the lineup sheet has been given to the official scorekeeper and opposing manager. Players who have not arrived at the field, but whom the manager believes may still arrive, will be listed as a "substitute" on the line up sheet. If a player listed as a "substitute" on the lineup sheet does subsequently arrive, the manager should advise the umpire, the scorekeeper, and the opposing manager that the player has arrived. This late player who has been listed as a substitute must be added to the end of his team's batting order.

If a player has not been listed on his team's lineup sheet either in the batting order or as a "substitute", he will not be allowed to play in that game. If a player who has been listed as a "substitute" on his team's lineup sheet does not arrive anytime during the game, no "out" or penalty due to his absence will be assessed against his team.

If the manager elects to list a player in the batting order, and that player is not present at the time of his turn at bat, an "out" will be recorded against the missing player's team. If the player's absence continues, an "out" will be recorded against the missing player's team each time his turn at bat comes up. Upon his arrival, the player can take his turn at bat in the position he is listed at on the lineup sheet.

10. Base Stealing: No stealing of bases is allowed. A runner can leave the base only when the pitched ball crosses home plate, but must return to the base if the pitched ball is not hit into play.

11. Sliding & Overrunning of Bases: Sliding into any base is permitted. A runner cannot overrun second or third base without placing himself in jeopardy of being tagged out. Exception - The League Director and team managers of each league may adopt a different policy on sliding and/or overrunning of bases applicable to their respective league only. Such policy shall be written and a copy given to the Secretary for use by the BOD.

12. Courtesy Runner: Any base runner may be courtesy run for. The base runner must request a courtesy runner. Any courtesy runner may run for a man on base once per inning. A courtesy runner can be replaced by another courtesy runner in a situation where the first courtesy runner is injured. If a courtesy runners' time at bat comes up while he is on base as a courtesy runner, he shall be called out and the following batter shall come to the plate.

Exception: In the National League, a Team Manager may at his discretion, replace a base runner with a courtesy runner.

13. Mercy Rules:

A. Five Run Rule: When a team has scored five (5) runs in an inning, it must cease being on the offensive and take the field defensively.

Exception - When a team is behind in the score, that team is permitted to score as many runs as needed to tie the score and can continue to score an additional five (5) more runs before they are required to cease their offense and take the field defensively.

Exception - If at the end of regulation play due to expiration of the time clock prior to the seventh inning with the score tied, there will be no limit to the number of runs that can be scored by either team during subsequent innings.

Exception - If the game reaches the 7th inning, regardless of the score, the seventh and all subsequent innings, if needed, will have no limit to the number of runs that can be scored by either team.

B. Game Ending Mercy Rule: CSSA leagues that play under a clock shall not employ a game ending mercy rule. Gold League games without a clock shall have a Game Ending Mercy Rule of 20 runs after 7 innings.

14. Tie Breaker Rule: When both teams are tied when regulation time has expired, the International Tie Breaker rule will apply. That is, the last batter of the previous inning will be placed at second base at the beginning of each teams turn at bat. A courtesy runner will be allowed.

15. Protests: A team manager has the right to protest an umpire's interpretation of the rules, provided a verbal protest is made immediately and before the next pitch. Thereafter, the protesting team manager (or his assistant) shall submit to a CSSA Officer (other than himself, if applicable) his written protest within twenty-four (24) hours.

On all matters outside the jurisdiction of the umpire at the field of play, a team manager has the right to protest an action taken by an opposing team's manager that adversely and unfairly effects the competitive balance between the teams. Such a protest must be in writing, specify the action or event complained of and the relief sought. The protest shall be submitted to a CSSA Officer (other than himself, if applicable) within twenty-four (24) hours of the complaining manager obtaining knowledge of the action or event in question.

Upon receipt of the written protest, the BOD will review the protest and determine the appropriate disposition of the matter. If any protest involves a team/league in which a member of the BOD is a player, that member shall be disqualified from voting on the disposition of that protest. The remaining voting members of the BOD shall constitute an appropriate quorum for the disposition of the protest. The decision of the BOD is final.

16. Player Utilizations:

A. Substitutions: Each team manager may make unlimited defensive substitutions, including the assignment to any defensive position a player who has been substituted for previously during the game. Players returning to the game do not have to return to their previous defensive position.

B. Batting Order: If a rostered player is present at the start of a softball game, he must be placed in the continuous batting order of his team, but may be used defensively in whatever manner, if any, deemed appropriate in the sole discretion of the team manager. This rule does not apply to a rostered player who is injured and cannot play but wants to observe the game. Exception: If a League has duly adopted a different rule regarding mandatory placement in the batting order, such league rule shall apply.

C. Defensive Placement of Players: A team may position defensively its players at any place in the field of play, provided at all times it has one player as pitcher at the pitcher's rubber and one player as catcher behind the plate. Exception: If a League has duly adopted a different rule regarding the mandatory position of catcher, such league rule shall apply.

17. Third Strike Rule: After two (2) strikes on the batter, any ball hit foul or any swing by the batter without bat contact with the ball shall be recorded as a strikeout.

18. Equipment: The League Director and team managers of each league shall determine the policy on equipment limitations applicable to their respective league only. Such policy shall be written and a copy given to the Secretary for use by the BOD. [Some league(s) may wish to limit

the use of certain bats or utilize optically enhanced colored softballs or softballs with different cores].

A. Disguised Equipment: Any player found using or attempting to use a "disguised" illegal bat will be subject to disciplinary actions including suspension from the CSSA for up to one year. Any bat that is painted, decal'd , or otherwise modified to hide it's true identity will be presumed to be an illegal bat.

19. Rankings: Each team shall be ranked within their league based on their won-loss percentage. Teams with the same winning percentage shall be ranked by head to head record, NET RUNS (runs for minus runs against), and lastly by a coin toss. The team with the highest ranking shall have earned the right to be the home team in all position round games and playoff games.

20. Player Pool: Should the standing BOD determine that a player pool be required, the following will be applicable. Eight (8) team roster players for that team must be available to start the game and eight (8) team roster players are needed to continue the game. If both teams have the same number of roster players, pool players will not be allowed. Any team that picks up players from the player pool may pick up the number of pool players so as to come up to a total of the number of defensive players being used by the opposing team. If a team picks up a particular pool player, that team may not pick up and use that same player in any subsequent game within that season. If it is discovered by the BOD that a team is using the same pool player a second time during the season, the game shall be forfeited. Pool players must bat at the end of the line up in all leagues. If a team roster player shows up for a team using a pool player, and the team roster player has been listed as a substitute on the lineup, the team roster player will immediately replace the pool player. If the replacement is not immediately made, the opposing manager may lodge a protest to the umpire during the game. The protest would be for an illegal player. The National League may only draw pool players from the Roster Players of the American or Masters Leagues with no restrictions as to position. The American League may only draw pool players from the Roster Players of the Masters League with no restrictions as to position. The Masters League may only draw pool players from the Roster Players of the Master League with no restrictions as to position. The Gold Junior League may only draw pool players from the Roster Players of the Gold Senior League with no restrictions as to position. The Gold Senior League may only draw pool players from the Roster Players of the Gold Senior League with no restrictions as to position.

21. Playoffs: When two or more teams have the same league leading won-loss record at the end of the season, the championship will be determined in the following manner, depending on the number of tied teams and with the higher ranked team being the home team in all games:

Two Teams: A single game playoff for the championship.

Three Teams: The two lower ranked teams will play a single game, with the winner playing a single game against the highest ranked team for the championship.

Four Teams: The highest and lowest ranked teams shall play, and the second and third ranked teams shall play, with the two winners playing a single championship game.

Playoff dates and times shall be arranged and scheduled by the Commissioner, or his delegate (who is not a member or manager of any of the playoff teams) in cooperation with the involved team managers.

22. Pitching Arc: CSSA will use a pitching arc of six to twelve feet. That is a pitch must be at least 6 feet in height and be less than 12 feet in height to be ruled a legal pitch. This rule supercedes any other rule by any other organization.

23. Pitching Box: The pitcher will be allowed to pitch in an area between the pitching rubber and a line six feet behind the pitching rubber, toward second base. The width of the pitching area will be equal to the width of the pitching rubber.