

PLAYING RULES

Updated July 2009

I. GENERAL

- A. Except as amended by these rules, the Fairfax County Girls Softball League (FCGSL) shall adopt and abide by the current year's Official Rules of Softball published by the Amateur Softball Association (ASA).
- B. The FCGSL Executive Board reserves the right to make any decisions involving safety, general welfare, or overall league operations (protests, forfeitures, etc.) in carrying out its responsibilities for the well being of the league.

II. ELIGIBILITY

A. **TEAMS**

- 1. A team shall become a competing member of the FCGSL upon compliance with each of the below listed conditions and upon the approval of its application by the Executive Board. The conditions for team membership are:
 - a. Team personnel and sponsors must agree to be governed by the By-Laws and Rules of the FCGSL.
 - b. Teams and all team personnel must be eligible to compete in conformance with current ASA rules and regulations, and as amended by the FCGSL.
 - c. Teams must be ASA registered.
 - d. Teams will be required to furnish proof of accident or liability insurance.
 - e. The registration fee has been submitted and received as required. The Executive Board may waive this fee at its discretion.

B. **COACHES**

- 1. All officers and members of the FCGSL are eligible to coach teams therein.
- 2. All coaches must abide by the FCGSL Sportsmanship Code

C. **PLAYERS**

- 1. Any girl who is older than six (6) and less than nineteen (19) years of age prior to January 1st of the year in which she participates is eligible to play in the FCGSL.
- 2. A player's age as of January 1st of the year in which she participates determines the age classification in which the player is eligible to play. For example, a player participating in the 18U Division in 2003 must be born after January 1, 1985.
- 3. If eligible in all aspects according to current ASA rules, players will automatically acquire nonvoting membership in the FCGSL when their names are included on a team roster, which has been submitted and accepted in accordance with the By-Laws and Rules of the FCGSL.
- 4. All players must abide by the FCGSL Sportsmanship Code.

D. **TEAMS**

- 1. Teams may carry an unlimited number of players on their FCGSL roster. Players may be added to or deleted from the roster until the final roster deadline published in the current year's FCGSL registration information.

E. **ROSTERS**

- 1. Rosters are required for each season.
- 2. The final roster must be submitted to the Registrar in accordance with the registration form instructions. No team may participate until the roster has been received.
- 3. A player may participate on ONE single FCGSL team per summer season.
- 4. During games, teams that are short players may borrow players from other FCGSL teams on site so the games can be played and a forfeit avoided.
- 5. Any additions to the roster must be submitted to the Registrar before the next game that the new player will play.

F. **MISCELLANEOUS**

1. Any team and/or applicant furnishing false or misleading information to the FCGSL may be removed from the league by the Executive Board. The decision of the Executive Board may be appealed to the Board of Directors. The league may retain any fees that were paid to the FCGSL.

III. **PROTESTS**

- A. There are no protests; the umpire's decisions are final.

IV. **UNIFORMS & EQUIPMENT**

- A. For FCGSL play (not ASA sanctioned tournaments), the minimum uniform for all players will be shirts alike in color, trim and style. All shirts must have a number on the back, with the number being of contrasting color and at least six inches high
- B. Baseball-type hats, visors and/or headbands are allowed, and they should conform to the team's uniform colors. Hats, visors and/or headbands are optional, may be mixed, and may be worn as desired by the player.
- C. The catcher must wear a catcher's helmet in accordance with appropriate ASA rules, a mask with a throat protector, a chest protector, and shin guards.
- D. Protective headgear covering both ears and temples must be worn by the batter, on-deck batter, and all base runners. Protective head gear must have a chin strap and mask over the face. The umpire will call out any base runner that intentionally removes her batting helmet while the ball is in play.
- E. The wearing of metal spikes, football cleats, or regular street shoes by a player is not permitted.

V. **FIELD & GAMES - GENERAL**

- A. Prior to the start of the games, each team shall provide the umpire with one new game ball. If teams are playing in a round-robin doubleheader (with four teams playing on adjoining fields), teams will leave the game balls with the umpire at the first field and collect a used game ball from the umpire at the conclusion of the second game.
- B. The winning team must email or phone the game results to the Division Commissioner of its respective division within 24 hours.
- C. If nine players are not available, a team may start or continue to play a game with at least seven players.
 1. Players arriving after the beginning of the game shall be placed at the bottom of the batting order.
 2. During games, a team short of players may borrow players from other FCGSL teams on site so the games can be played and a forfeit avoided.
- D. Unless otherwise noted on the league schedule, the first team listed on the game schedule shall be the home team and will normally occupy the third base dugout.
- E. Three players from a team participating in the game (pitcher, catcher and one other to protect the other two) may, at the discretion of the umpire, be allowed inside a fenced field after dark, when the field lights are on, for the purpose of warming up the pitcher, while a game is in progress. Said players must be in the outfield, in foul territory down either the right or left field lines, and pose minimal obstruction to the game in progress. This rule will apply at all fields where there is inadequate room or lighting available outside the fenced playing area to adequately and safely warm up a pitcher.
- F. Teams may, if they wish, use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and the catcher. The courtesy runner shall be a player who has not entered the game. If such a player is not available, then the player who made the last out shall be the courtesy runner. The same player SHALL NOT be used as the courtesy runner for both the pitcher and the catcher in the same half-inning. A courtesy runner, when utilized, is not considered a substitute in the game.
 1. In unlimited substitution, or when a team has nine or fewer players, the team may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and the catcher. The courtesy runner shall be the player who made the last out. The same player SHALL NOT be used as the courtesy runner for both the pitcher and the catcher in the same half-inning.
- G. In all divisions, the teams may choose to bat only 9 players (ASA rule) or bat all players. Prior to the start of each game, each team must declare if they will bat 9 or all players. Once the game

begins, this election cannot be changed. If a team elects to bat all players, the following modifications to standard ASA rules will apply:

1. On offense, all players present will be placed in the batting order and will bat in turn. Players who arrive after the start of the game will be added to the bottom of the batting order in the order in which they arrive.
 2. Players who are removed from the game due to injury or having to leave the game site will be skipped over in the batting order with no penalty each time their turn at bat comes up.
 3. If a player is injured while on base and has to be removed from the game, the team on offense will be able to employ a substitute runner for the injured player. The substitute runner will be the player on the injured player's team who was called out most recently in the game.
 4. On defense, players may be substituted freely when the ball is not in play. No players on defense are required to play any minimum number of innings, and it will not be necessary to notify the opposing team or umpires of any defensive substitutions.
- H. In all divisions, both the ASA infield fly and dropped third strike rules are in effect. The ASA rule allowing continuation past first base to second base by the batter-base runner on a base-on-balls is also in effect.

VI. GAME TIMES & SCORING LIMITS - GENERAL

- A. League games will start as scheduled, any team not ready to play within fifteen minutes after the scheduled starting time will forfeit the game, providing the opposing team has at least seven players present.
- B. The first game starts at the time on the game schedule provided by the age level commissioner, unless the game starts early pursuant to VI.D. below. The second game of a scheduled doubleheader will begin 10 minutes after the end of the first game. The time limit for each game will be one hour and twenty minutes (1:20) with no new inning beginning after one hour and fifteen minutes (1:15). The home plate umpire will enforce the time limit on games. If the time limit is reached while a player is at bat, the player will be permitted to complete her turn at bat and then the game will be declared completed. Under no circumstances will a game continue beyond 11:00 PM on any field used by the FCGSL.
- C. The Division Commissioner may adjust the game times as necessary to ensure playing all scheduled games in a day.
- D. A game may be started prior to the scheduled game time, provided both managers and the umpire(s) agree. The game time limit will be calculated from the actual starting time.
- E. Should the time limit expire, the winner will be the team that was ahead at the end of the last completed inning, unless it is the bottom of an inning and the home team is ahead when time expires. In this case, the home team shall be the winner.
- F. In round-robin play, time permitting; the ITB (International Tie Breaker) may be used for one inning. If time does not allow, a coin toss will determine the outcome of the game.
- G. A game shall be called by the umpire and shall be a regulation game if one team leads their opponent by ten or more runs after five or more complete innings, or after the second team at bat has taken a lead of ten or more runs in their half of the fifth or later innings.
- H. After one specific warning to the head coach, a forfeited game may be declared by the umpire in favor of the team not at fault if a team employs tactics NOTICEABLY designed to delay or hasten the game.
- I. In both the A and B Divisions, there will be a five run limit per inning for the first four innings of the game, if five runs are scored before three outs have been made on the team at bat. There will be no limitations on the number of runs that may be scored in innings five through seven (five and six for 10U) of the game. If both coaches agree, this rule may be waived.

VII. 18U SPECIFIC RULES

- A. None.

VIII. 16U SPECIFIC RULES

- A. None.

- IX. **14U SPECIFIC RULES**
A. None.
- X. **12U SPECIFIC RULES**
A. None.
- XI. **10U SPECIFIC RULES**
A. A game will be limited to six (6) innings.
B. The stealing of any base (including home plate) is permitted, but only one base may be stolen per pitch. The runner MAY NOT advance to the next base on an overthrow.
- XII. **POSTPONEMENT POLICY**
A. No game will be postponed or rescheduled, other than for weather or unplayable field conditions.
B. The Fairfax County Park Authority will determine if a County Park field is playable, and may direct postponement of a game if the field is not considered to be safe or playable.
C. FCGSL will make determinations regarding whether a school field is playable.
- XIII. **ROUND-ROBIN to THREE-WAY**
A. In a round-robin format, when only three teams are available to participate, the two team originally scheduled to play shall play each other as scheduled but the time limit will be changed to a straight drop-dead limit of one hour.
B. The winner of the game shall immediately play the idle team. This game will also have a drop-dead time limit of one hour.
C. The loser of the first game then shall play the idle team from the first set of games; this game will also have a drop-dead time limit of one hour.
- XIV. **MISSED GAMES**
A. Teams shall inform their commissioner of their inability to field a team of at least seven players at least 24-hours in advance of the scheduled game time. Failure to do so may result in the team being suspended from the FCGSL for the remainder of the season with no refund or credit.
B. Credits will not be issued to teams who miss scheduled games due to inability to field a team.
C. Credits will be issued to teams who miss games due to weather in accordance with the FCGSL Refund policy, Rule XVI – A.
- XV. **SCOREKEEPERS & SCOREBOOKS**
A. Each team shall provide a scorekeeper who shall maintain a scorebook throughout each game.
B. The HOME team scorekeeper and scorebook shall be the official record of the game.
- XVI. **REFUNDS**
A. FCGSL will make every attempt to have teams play all games for which payment has been received. However, occasionally circumstances beyond the control of the teams and FCGSL will preclude this from occurring. If this occurs, the policy of the FCGSL is to not issue refunds but rather to credit the team with games for the next season.