



1979 - 2004

25 Years

## Sun Cities Senior Softball League

# American League Rules

Approved – September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009

The **League** will be governed by **ASA** rules except as modified.

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### **A. GENERAL**

The organization shall be known as **the Sun Cities Senior Softball League (SCSSL)**. It is hereafter referred to as the **League**. A seven (7) member board of directors shall govern the League. See the Sun Cities Senior Softball League Operational Procedures for more information.

### **B. ORGANIZATION**

The **League** will be composed of players from **the Sun City West Softball Club** and players from the **Sun City Senior Softball Club**. There will be two (2) Divisions, American and National. Committees appointed by the **League** will organize (team managers, draft) teams for each fall, spring and summer schedule. The ALC is to recommend to the League Board any proposed changes to the League Rules, and the League Board will be responsible for any disciplinary action as the League Board deems necessary.

### **C. UNIFORMS**

The Club furnishes socks, pants, shorts and caps/women's visors. Articles of uniforms are for league or club play only and are not to be used for non-league/club activities. Alterations are not permitted except for temporary "tucks" for fit. Any permanent alterations will result in a charge to the player. Knee socks and caps will be replaced on an exchange basis only, as will shorts and pants worn out or damaged by play. *All articles of uniform are property of the club.* Any player who resigns his membership must return shirts, pants and shorts.

In support of our sponsors, a full league-issued uniform consisting of cap/woman's visor, pants or shorts, socks (pulled up), and the team shirt must be worn so the sponsor's name is clearly visible and shirrtails tucked in. White socks, "crew" length or higher may be worn in place of the league issued striped socks but they must be purchased by the player. With the exception of umpires, all players, coaches and managers must wear their league issued uniforms. In case of cold or inclement weather, additional clothing will be allowed.

***Players will not be allowed to play unless dressed in their properly worn, league-issued uniforms.*** However, players will be given one warning by the umpire to immediately fix the problem or be removed.

The team will be charged with an out each time the player would have come to bat. Player must notify the umpire of any medical exceptions. The League Board will be notified of repeated offenses and will be dealt with at the League Board.

This rule is for the benefit of the sponsors, for proper newspaper/team pictures and for the professionalism of the Sun Cities Senior Softball League.

### **D. GAME RULES**

#### **1. General**

**A.** Each game will be 7 innings except for the following: After 60 minutes have expired, the current inning will be completed and one additional full inning will be played, if needed. There will be no run limit in that additional inning unless it is an extra inning (>7). The umpires are responsible for insuring the game starts on time and that both teams are notified when the time expires that the next regular inning will allow unlimited runs or whether or not ties can be broken by additional innings.

**B.** The first game will start no later than its prescribed start time from the schedule, unless otherwise indicated. At the designated time, the scorekeeper will start the clock whether teams are ready or not.

**C.** Teams are limited to five (5) runs per inning except for the final inning in which each team can score an unlimited number of runs. All extra innings revert to the 5 runs per inning rule.

**2. Mercy Rule** – Games will be 7 innings or the time limit which ever comes first. If the visiting team is ahead by 10 or greater runs, the unlimited inning will be reversed where the home team bats first and then the visiting team bats if needed.

**3. Tie Games** – If the score is tied after 7 complete innings, and there was no time on the clock when the 7th inning was started, each team will be credited with ½ win. If the score is tied after 7 complete innings and there was time left on the clock, (see 1A) we will use international tie breaking rules which means each team will start succeeding innings with the last batter of the previous inning on second base. If that person is injured, a substitute runner will be allowed. If the last batter of the previous inning had been using a pinch runner because of injury, the last batter must be put on 2nd base, but may use a pinch runner once he gets to 3<sup>rd</sup> base. The game will then continue until the time limit has expired or one team wins. Any additional innings will revert to the 5 run maximum per inning.

**4. Canceled Games** – Only a League board member in attendance or the participating managers can cancel games. When any game is canceled due to inclement weather, succeeding games at that field will be cancelled. The person canceling the games must contact all the managers of subsequent games to notify them of the cancellation so they can call their players. When part of the day's schedule is completed and the weather closes the field, completed games will count for the record. A game must be 5 complete innings to be considered complete unless the home team is ahead at the end of 4 ½.

## **E. PLAYING RULES**

**1. Team Organization** – Each team will consist of a minimum of 11 players. When additional players are assigned, all will bat and each plays at least 5 innings on defense. In order to enter the game, a player arriving late for a game must arrive before the team has batted through the line up. A non-injured player, who leaves a game early, for any reason, will be declared an “out” each time he would have come to bat. No substitutes allowed for a non-injured player that leaves. When an injured player must leave the game and team strength falls below eleven, an eligible sub may be selected of equal or lesser rating from the stands. That player then bats in the same position in the line-up as the injured player (substitutes may now bat anywhere in the order). **If a team is playing with 12 or more players and a player becomes injured, that spot will be bypassed in the batting order with no penalty for all subsequent at bats.** Teams must have a minimum of 9 players including substitutes to avoid a forfeit. Teams may not have a substitute if they have 11 regular team players unless they are missing a pitcher. In that case, they may have a substitute pitcher and play with 12 players. If they are missing a one rated player then they will be allowed to pick up a one rated substitute and play with 12.

**2. Substitutes** – When organizing teams, committees shall classify players in one of several groups based on ability. When the need for a substitute is known before game time, managers may select a player from the same grouping or a lower one. Exception: Pitchers - 4 rated pitchers may be substituted with 3's or 4's.

***Managers are encouraged to use a qualified Placement pool or Sub Pool player first, if possible*** before contacting players from other teams.

**Penalty for an illegal substitution:** After the game has started when the illegal player is detected he is to be removed from the game and the offending team plays the remainder of the game short. No substitutes will be allowed and that position in the batting line up will be an out each time he comes up. Any protest must be made during the game and must only be protested by a participating manager. ***No roster player may substitute more than twice (2) a week and only once (1) for the same team.*** A pool player may play four (4) games per week, but only once (1) for the same team. First violation will result in a verbal and written warning to the player and the manager involved. Further violation will be referred to the Sun Cities Senior Softball League Board for action deemed necessary.

**3. Courtesy Runners** – Courtesy runners will only be permitted for injured players. The manager must indicate on the score sheet all injured players requiring runners *prior* to the start of the game. If a player becomes injured during play he may then have a courtesy runner for all subsequent at bats. Courtesy runners will be allowed to run from any base.

With the exception of the stipulation above, we will follow the ASA rule for courtesy runners that states an individual can be a pinch runner once per inning and unlimited times per game.

A courtesy runner whose turn at bat comes while he is on base will be out. He will be removed from the base and come to bat. A second courtesy runner cannot be substituted at this time. A courtesy runner may not run for an existing courtesy runner except for an incurred injury.

So as not to delay the game, pitchers may get a non-charged courtesy runner for them with 1 or 2 outs to allow them to put on their equipment.

**4. Balls/Strikes** – A legal pitch with an arc between 6’ to 12’ that touches any part of the home plate or mat extension is a strike. The batter is out upon hitting a 3rd strike foul. Runners may advance at their own risk when a 3rd strike foul is caught.

**5. Base Running** –

**A. Double base at 1st** – When a play is being made on the batter-runner he must touch the orange part of the bag. If he touches the white he is in jeopardy of being put out if the defense appeals before he returns and touches the base. The defensive player must touch the white portion of the bag to record an out. *Exception:* If the defensive player at 1st is pulled into foul ground as a result of a bad throw, this player can also touch the orange base and record an out prior to the batter runner reaching the base. The batter-runner can use either the white or orange in each of these situations. (Rule 2, Sec 3-H-1-d)

**B. Sliding or diving** – from a running or standing position toward the base or home plate from any direction is prohibited. A runner who falls down short of a base or just beyond it may crawl back to the base without penalty.

**C. Avoid unnecessary contact** – In the interest of safety, runners coming into a base must avoid unnecessary contact with a defensive player who is receiving the ball for a force out. A defensive player may not block a runner when he is not fielding the ball.

**D. Commitment Line** – If the runner has passed the commitment line (20-foot marking), continues to run on the original foul line, and interferes with the fielder taking a throw at, and in contact with the plate, then: A dead ball shall be declared and the runner is out with no advancement for other runners.

**Comments:** In the Senior Slow Pitch game, a scoring line is placed eight feet from home plate and base runners should be using the direct line from third base to the scoring line. If interference occurs on a thrown ball, the runner is ruled out and the ball declared dead so other runners cannot advance. Defensive players can only touch home plate and runners can only touch the scoring line.

D. Commitment Line cont'd

1. Runners must cross the line with their foot down on the ground on or beyond the line located adjacent to the right-handed batter's box in order to be safe at home. If the runner falls and any part of his body is on the ground, on or past the line, he has crossed the line.
2. Runners tagged by the defensive team will not be out and the ball remains alive.
3. If the runner touches the plate, the runner will be out and the ball will remain live.

**6. Pitcher's Box –**

A pitcher's box consisting of the area from the front of the pitcher's plate, 50 feet from home plate extending back 6 feet and 24 inches wide will be used. The pitcher must release the ball *after coming to a complete stop* with one foot or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate or within the pitcher's box. One foot must remain in contact with the plate/box when the pitch is released with an underhand motion. A step simultaneous with the release of the ball may be taken in any direction with the free foot. The pitcher must be facing the batter when delivering the pitch.

If the sun presents a problem to the batter in the early morning, they may request that the pitcher moves to one side or the other of the pitching box to allow them to see the pitch.

**7. Protests –** Only an involved manager may protest. Judgment calls such as balls or strikes, runner out or safe, foul or fair are not grounds for protests. *Interpretation of the rules will be the only grounds for protest.* All protests should be settled on the field if possible. The League Board will rule upon unresolved issues with both managers and both umpires in attendance.

A. Participating game managers are given the right to waive a rule for the good of the game for unusual circumstances or emergencies.

**8. Ejections –** An umpire may eject a player who threatens or uses abusive language directly or indirectly toward an umpire, player or spectator. Umpires must submit a written report to the League president within 24 hours. An ejected player must leave the field within one (1) minute or the game will be forfeited to the opposing team. *An ejected player is automatically suspended from playing in his next regularly scheduled game.* If an offender continues to berate the offended party(s) after leaving the field/area the matter will be referred to the League Board for further disciplinary action. If a player actually attacks an umpire, player, or spectator, he is suspended from further play until the League Board can meet to decide his future status.

**9. Warm-Up Pitches –** After the first inning, there may be *3 warm-up pitches or 1-minute* whichever comes first. Five (5) warm-up pitches will be allowed when a pitcher relieves another. In the interest of pitcher safety, pitchers will be allowed time to put on protective gear before the 1 minute countdown starts. Infield practice is allowed for all innings during the time the pitcher is warming up.

**10. Batting out of Order –** A batter shall be called out, on appeal, for batting out of order only after he completes his time at bat. If the error is discovered before he completes his time at bat, the correct batter will bat and assume the current count of balls and strikes. The appeal must be made before the first pitch to the next batter is made.

**11. Home Runs –** Any fair ball hit over the home run fence will count as a home run. We do not have a "one up rule" or "second home run out or single" rule.

**F. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PLAYERS**

1. **Absentees** – Managing a team is a difficult job requiring the full cooperation of all team members. If you are going to be late, or miss game, notify your manager well ahead of time. Arrive at the field a half-hour before game time to loosen up properly and thus avoid unnecessary muscle injuries. Note that a player who misses 5 successive games will be replaced with a pool player of equal rating and he will be placed in the pool. If the manager wishes, he can replace the player with a lower rated player from the placement pool. If a lower rated player is chosen, his rating will be elevated for that season to the rating of the player he is replacing. This also applies to players not present at the start of a season.
2. **Umpires** – will usually be assigned to the game that precedes or follows their game. Learn the rules and duties, and don't hesitate to ask other players beforehand when in doubt about a rule. Players are encouraged to attend an Umpire Clinic.
3. **Scorekeepers** – must know how to mark the scorebook and use the equipment, and are encouraged to score properly as the Newspaper Game Reporter counts solely on the score sheets.
4. **Field Maintenance** – The Home Team is responsible for preparing the field before the first game and securing the field after the last game. If you are involved, arrive early.

The above 4 player responsibilities are an obligation of each player. Players must give their manager proper notice if they can't perform any of these duties when assigned. If they don't, the manager can use his discretion as to how to deal with the offense.

5. **Resigning** – If a player quits a team, he will be out of the league for the rest of the session.
6. **Banned/Altered Bat** – Any player that uses a bat banned by the SCSSL or ASA or an altered bat that enhances its performance is subject to suspension from play for up to one (1) year by the SCSSL. Arthritic grips and name-address labels are permitted. The infraction would also be subject to being reported to all local, state and regional jurisdictions as well as the ASA. The player would then be subject to any ban these organizations impose. Flagrant violations could result in permanent bans from all jurisdictions.
7. **Legal Bats** – All bats prior to 2000 that are currently being used will be grandfathered as legal bats. Bats purchased after 2000 shall have the ASA stamped sticker of 2000 or 2004 stamped on the bat. The Miken MSF Freak 100 with a ASA stamped sticker is grandfathered in as a legal bat.

