

SUN CITIES SENIOR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

NATIONAL LEAGUE RULES

REVISED 15 MAY 2011

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

CONTENTS:

A. General	E. Playing Rules	F. Players Responsibility
B. Organization	1. Team Organizations	1. Absentees
C. Uniforms	2. Substitutes	2. Umpires and Scorekeepers
D. Game Rules	3. Courtesy Runners	3. Field Maintenance
1. General	4. Ball / Strikes	4. Resignation
2. Mercy Rule	5. Base Running	5. Player Pool
3. Tie Game	6. Pitcher's Box	6. Banned / Altered Bats
4. Cancelled / Delayed Games	7. Protests / Appeals	
	8. Ejections	
	9. Warm Up Pitches	
	10. Banned Bats	
	11. Batting Out of Order	

A. General

The National League Committee shall consist of a maximum of four (4) members including the Chairman. The National League Committee Chairman shall appoint new members when there is a vacancy. Two (2) Sun City West and Two (2) Sun City National League players will serve as Committee Members. (See "National League Committee Guidelines").

B. Organizations

The League will be composed of players from the Sun City West Softball Club and the Sun City Softball Club. Number of teams will be determined by the National League Committee. Selection of players to teams will follow National League Committee Guidelines for all sessions.

C. Uniforms

The club furnishes pants, shorts, belts, and hats. Articles of uniforms are for league play only and 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. 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 the property of the club and will be returned by any player who resigns his membership. In support of our sponsors, shirts should be worn so the sponsor's name is clearly visible, shirttails tucked in.

All players, coaches, and managers should wear their team shirt, but not required for umpires. In case of cold or inclement weather, protective clothing will be allowed over uniforms as agreed by managers.

D. Game Rules

1. General

A. The clock for the first game of the day will start at the designated time regardless of whether the teams are ready or not. The clock shall be set at sixty (60) minutes. When time expires the inning in progress will be completed and one more inning will be played. Umpires have the responsibility to expedite play at all times. Stalling is not tolerated. Manager must get their teams on and off the field without delay.

B. Seven (7) innings per game except as discussed under 2-A, 2-B, and 3 tie game.

C. Teams are limited to four (4) runs per inning except for the 7th inning (or last inning as determined by the umpires). In which each team can score an unlimited number of runs. Play in extra innings reverts to the four (4) run per inning rule.

2. Mercy Rule

A. 3 Run Rule

If the visiting team is ahead by three (3) runs or more at the end of six (6) innings, the home team will clear the bases and continue to bat in the top of the 7th inning. If home team does not tie or go ahead, the game is over. In the event the home team ties or goes ahead the visiting team will get last at bat.

B. 12 Run Rule

If either team is ahead by twelve (12) or more at the end of (6) innings, GAME OVER. If home team is ahead by twelve (12) or more after 5 1/2 innings, GAME OVER.

3. Tie Games

If score is tied after the final complete inning, and the time has expired, each team will be credited with a 1/2 win. If the score is tied after the final (7th) inning and there are three (3) or more minutes left on the clock, only one extra (8th) inning will be played. Each team will start succeeding eighth (8th) inning with the last batter on second base. No substitute runner allowed except rule E-3, "Courtesy Runner".

4. Cancelled / Delayed Games

Games shall only be cancelled by a league representative. When any game is cancelled due to inclement weather or poor field conditions, succeeding games at the field will be cancelled. When part of the day's schedule is completed and the weather closes the field, completed games will count for the record. A completed game is any game five (5) innings or more. Four and a half (4 1/2) innings if home team is ahead. In the event games are delayed due to frost or other temporary conditions the games will be played after the delay and a reduction of innings played may be implemented if the delay is more than thirty (30) minutes. A reduction of innings must be decided by a member of the National League Committee.

E. PLAYING RULES

1. Team Organizations

Each team will consist of a minimum of eleven (11) players. When additional players are assigned, all will bat and each player will play at least three (3) innings per defense. A tardy player who arrives before the team has batted through the batting order may play, player will bat at the bottom of the order and play any position. A tardy player who arrives after team has batted through the batting order will not play. 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 substitutions allowed for a non-injured player. Teams can play with any number of roster players and subs as long as the total is at least nine (9). A team will have a maximum of twelve (12) players. Extra players will be placed in a sub pool for future assignment.

If a team has a maximum of twelve (12) in the line-up and a player leaves the game due to an injury, the player's position in the line-up for future at bats will be by-passed with NO PENALTY.

2. Substitutes - Substitute players may be obtained from the following sources.

- A. The official player replacement pool or sub pool listed on roster.
- B. The Bye team.
- C. Players from the teams playing the prior game.
- D. A one (1), two (2), three (3) or four (4) rated player may sub for a one (1) rated player. A two (2), three (3) or four (4) rated player may sub for a two (2) rated player. A three (3) or four (4) rated player may sub for a three (3) rated player and a three (3) or four (4) rated player may sub for a four (4) rated player.
- E. Exception Number 1 - Substitutes for the first game of the day may be obtained from the teams playing the second game.
- F. Exception Number 2 - Substitute pitchers may be obtained from any team. **Rule 2 D applies.**
- G. Exception Number 3 - An injured player may be replaced if team strength drops below eleven (11). Select a player from the stands (prior game if possible). Selected player must have same player rating or higher. The replacement bats in the injured players batting position.
- H. Exception Number 4 - If a team has an unexpected NO SHOW for the first game of the day and a player from the second game is not available, manager may select any available player. Selected player must have same player rating or higher.
- I. Managers may call in advance to obtain substitutes from any of the above mentioned sources.
- J. Penalty for an Illegal substitution - If a player is identified as an illegal substitute per the substitution rules, that player will be removed from the game. The offending team will continue to play minus the illegal player. The position will remain open in the line up and an out will be recorded each time that "position" is scheduled to bat.
- K. A player may substitute only two (2) times each week and only one (1) time for the same team. **Exception: If the player is listed on the sub list they may substitute four (4) times each week but still only one (1) time for the same team.**
- L. Substitute players must be placed at the bottom of the batting order. (not for injury rule 2-G).
- M. When designated by the National League Committee, two (2) designated Catchers may be assigned to the same team. They will be treated as one (1) for substitution purposes.

3. Courtesy Runners

- A. Courtesy runners may be used from home or any base. The Manager, prior to start of game, must register with the scorekeeper and opposing Manager those players re-

quiring a courtesy runner. A TEAM MAY HAVE A MAXIMUM OF TWO (2) WHO NEED A RUNNER PRIOR TO START OF GAME. If a player becomes injured during the game, a courtesy runner may be utilized for that player for the remainder of that game only. Manager and Player to decide if player finishes the game with a courtesy runner or leaves the game and allows the manager to get a replacement player, (providing team doesn't have twelve (12) players). After that game the injured player will take time off as necessary until player can again run the bases. This is to avoid a more serious injury.

- B. Courtesy runners are to be used for players having physical limitations. In order to protect the integrity and fairness of the game, managers may not use a courtesy runner for players that are just slow runners.
- C. A player may be used as a courtesy runner once (1) per inning.
- D. A courtesy runner from home plate shall not cross the runner line until the ball is struck. Should the runner leave early batter to be called out only in the event batter hits the ball into fair territory. The primary responsibility for this call goes to the base umpire, although either umpire can make the call.
- E. A player that is registered for a courtesy runner must use one for every time at bat. Registered player (batter) may advance to any base and ask for the courtesy runner from that base. A courtesy runner whose turn at bat comes while on base will be called out. The player will be removed from the bases and come to bat. A second courtesy runner cannot be substituted. A courtesy runner may not run for another courtesy runner. A courtesy runner from home plate cannot run past "First" (1st) base.

4. Balls / Strikes

- A. A legal pitch with an arc between six (6) ft. to twelve (12) ft. that touches any part of the plate or mat extension is a strike. The batter is out upon hitting a third strike foul. Runners may advance at their own risk when a third (3rd) strike foul is caught.

5. Base Running

- A. No infield fly rule.
- B. Double first base: When a play is being made on the batter/runner, runner 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. If defensive player at 1st is pulled into foul territory as a result of a bad throw, the defensive player can also touch orange base and record an out prior to the batter/runner reaching the base. The batter/runner can use either the white or orange base in each of these situations.
- C. Home Base Runner Line: A line that is on first base side and extended six (6) ft. from the fence and aligned with fence marker. Used by a runner who is running for a batter (batter is listed as needing courtesy on score sheet). Line treated same as any other base as far as leaving the base early. Line placed three (3) feet behind the foul line.
- D. Sliding and 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 a penalty.
- E. Contact: Runners must avoid unnecessary contact with a defensive player who is fielding the ball and must veer out of the base path to avoid contact. A defensive player may not

block a runner when he is not fielding the ball.

F. Commitment Line: If the runner has passed the commitment line (twenty 20 ft. from home base) and continues to run on the foul line and interferes with the catcher taking a throw at the original home plate, a dead ball shall be declared and the runner is out. The scoring line is placed eight (8) ft. from the home plate and base runners should be using the guiding line from the foul line to the scoring line to avoid contact with defensive player. Defensive player can only touch the original home plate and runners can only touch the scoring line.

1. Runners must cross the scoring line with their foot down on the ground and beyond or on the line located adjacent to the right-handed batters box in order to be safe at home.
2. Runners tagged by the defensive team after crossing commitment line will be safe.
3. If the runner touches home plate, the runner will be out and the ball remains live.

G. Defensive players cannot decoy the base runners into thinking a play is being made on him or her to impede their progress.

H. If Courtesy Runners from home and the batter both run past the designated runners line, the batter will be called out, the ball is dead. The designated line will be drawn approximately twenty four (24) ft. from home plate, at the foul line.

6. Pitchers Box (Optional)

A line will be drawn six (6) feet back from the pitching rubber and the same width of the pitching rubber. That line along with the pitching rubber will form a pitchers box. The pitcher must present and release the ball while standing within the imaginary box.

7. Protests / Appeals

Only a MANAGER may appeal a call. Judgment call such as balls or strikes, runner out or safe and foul or fair balls are not grounds for appeal. Interpretation of the rules will be the only grounds for a protest and will be settled on the field between the umpires and two managers. Managers must appeal other violations such as an ineligible sub or runner, runner missing a bag, interference and batter batting out of order to the home umpire. any situation where a rule is not covered in our National League Rules, two managers and umpires must agree to a solution.

8. Ejections

An umpire may eject a player who threatens or uses abusive language directly or indirectly toward an umpire, player, or spectator. Umpire ejecting a player must submit a written report to the National League Committee Chairman within twenty four (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 and will be subject to further disciplinary action. If a player attacks an umpire, player, or spectator, The National League Committee suspends the player from further play pending a decision on disciplinary action. Presidents of both the Sun City West and Sun City Softball Clubs are to be sent copies of action taken.

9. Warm-Up Pitches

At the beginning of each inning, three (3) warm-up pitches or one (1) minute which ever comes first. Five (5) warm-up pitches will be allowed when a pitcher relieves another. Infield warm-up will be discontinued after the 3rd inning.

10. Equipment

No banned bats (See ASA banned bat list) will be allowed during National League play.

11. Batting Out of Order

The scorekeeper shall notify the home plate umpire immediately if a batter is hitting out of order and only the correct batter will bat. No Penalty.

F. PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Absentees:

Managing a team is a difficult job requiring the full cooperation of all the team members. If you are going to be late or miss a game, notify your manager well ahead of time. Arrive at the field at least thirty (30) minutes before your game to loosen up properly and thus avoid unnecessary muscle injuries. A player who misses five (5) successive games will be assigned to the placement sub pool.

2. Umpires and Scorekeepers:

A. The team manager will assign Umpires and Scorekeepers. It will be the responsibility of the player assigned to arrange for his own replacement if he is unavailable. Umpiring and scorekeeping responsibilities take precedence over any request to substitute as a player on another team. KNOW THE RULES / LEARN HOW TO KEEP SCORE

B. Umpires must consult with each other on protest or appeal calls.

C. Coaches/Players should not attempt to make the base running out or safe calls.

3. Field Maintenance:

The home team is responsible for preparing the field before the first game and securing the field after the last game. (BEFORE LEAVING FIELD MAKE SURE ALL BUILDINGS ARE LOCKED)

Before the start of the second game and every game thereafter the home team is responsible for grooming the base paths between games.

4. Resignations:

If a player quits a team, then that player becomes ineligible to play in the league for the remainder of the session. A player cannot switch leagues until the end of each session. Players are responsible for notifying the league if they are going to be inactive for a period or resigning their membership from the league. In case of injuries, notify league of your return date.

5. Player Pool:

Players are responsible for notifying the National League Committee member of their intention and availability to play in next scheduled session. Individuals must insure they are listed in the player pool in order to be placed on a team.

6. Banned / Altered Bats:

A. A bat is considered altered when the physical characteristics of a legal bat have been changed. Anything done to a bat to enhance the performance of a bat is illegal. Inserting material inside the bat, shaving the bat, applying excessive tape (more than 2 layers) to the bat grip, or painting the bat other than at the top or bottom for identification purposes are examples of altering a bat. Exceptions: knob grips/cones, colored tape for identification purposes, address labels, or friction tape are not considered altering a bat.

- B. Any umpire, club board member, or any member of the American League or National League Committee have the right to inspect any bat that they have "reason to believe" has been altered. If there is "probable cause" the person must surrender their bat for inspection. If the bat is suspect then the bat may digitally x-rayed for any alterations.
- C. Any player refusing to surrender their bat for inspection will be suspended from play immediately. the player will remain suspended from all play until such time that an inspection of the bat in question has been made. If the bat has been determined to be altered the player must appear before the Board of the club they belong to for disciplinary action.
- D. Any player found to have used an illegal or altered bat is subject to suspension from our league for up to one (1) year by the SCSSA. Flagrant or more than one offense is subject to further punishment. The infraction would also be subject to being reported to all local, state, and national organizations. the player would then be subject to any ban these organizations impose.
- E. Any player found to be using an illegal or altered bat during a game. the following rule applies: If the bat is found prior to batting the bat is removed from the game at that time. If the bat is found after the player bats, the batter is out and all runners return to the base they were at prior to the at bat.

National League Committee

Ron Eppley - Rules Coordinator