

**SUN CITIES SENIOR SOFTBALL LEAGUE  
NATIONAL LEAGUE RULES  
REVISED 15 OCTOBER 2009**

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

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**A. General**

The National League Committee shall consist of a maximum of four (4) including the Chairman. The National League 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. Organization**

The league will be composed of players from the Sun City West Softball Club and the Sun City Softball Club. National League committee will select teams using National League committee guidelines for each fall, spring, and summer schedule.

**C. Uniforms**

The club furnishes sock, pants, shorts, 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. 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 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. It is the players choice to wear issued socks or socks of their own choosing. If socks other than those issued are chosen, they must be crew socks and white in color.

All players, coaches, and managers should wear their team shirt, but not required for

umpires. 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. Managers 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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. 10 Run Rule**

**If the visiting team is ahead by ten (10) 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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. 15 Run Rule**

**If either team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs or more at the end of (6) innings, GAME OVER. If home team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs after 5 ½ 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 ½ win. If the score is tied after the final (7<sup>th</sup>) inning and there are three (3) or more minutes left on the clock, only one extra (8<sup>th</sup>) inning will be played. Each team will start succeeding (8<sup>th</sup>) inning with the last batter on second base. No substitute runner allowed except rule E-3, “Courtesy Runners”.**

### **4. Canceled / Delayed Games**

**Games shall only be canceled by a league representative. When any game is canceled due to inclement weather or poor field conditions, succeeding games at the field will be canceled. When part of the days 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 ½) inning 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 maybe 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). Teams are planned for a maximum of twelve (12) players. Extra players will be placed in a sub pool for future assignments.

If a team has 12 or more players in the line-up and a player leaves the game due to an Injury, the players position in the line-up for future at bats will be bypassed with NO PENALTY.

### **2. Substitutes.** Substitute players maybe obtained from the following sources.

A. The official player replacement pool (Subs listed on team roster)

B. The Bye team.

C. Players from the teams playing the prior game.

D. Exception number 1 – Substitutes for the first game of the day maybe obtained from the teams playing the second game.

E. Exception number 2 – Substitute pitchers maybe obtained from any team.

F. Managers may call in advance to obtain substitutes from any of the above-mentioned sources.

G. Exception number 3 – An injured player maybe replaced if team strength drops below Eleven (11). Select a player from the stands (prior game if possible). 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.

I. 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 lineup and an out will be recorded each time that “position” is scheduled to bat.

J. A player may substitute only two (2) times each week and only one (1) time for the same team.

K. Substitute players must be placed at bottom of batting order (not for injury-rule 2-G).

L. 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 requiring a courtesy runner. **ALL TEAMS 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 lets the manager get a replacement, (providing team does not have a 12<sup>th</sup> player). 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 per inning.

D. A courtesy runner from home plate shall not cross the runner line until the ball is struck. Batter to be called out only in the event the batter hits the ball into fair territory. Runners observed leaving early shall cause the batter to be called out. 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 can not be substituted. A courtesy runner may not run for another courtesy runner. A courtesy runner from home plate is limited to first (1<sup>st</sup>) 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 (3<sup>rd</sup>) 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 1<sup>st</sup> is

pulled into foul territory as a result of a bad throw. This 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 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 runner on score sheet). Line treated same as any other base as far as leaving the base early. Line placed 3 ft. 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 our 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 (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) feet 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 will be safe.
  - 3. If the runner touches home plate, the runner will be out and the ball will remain 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 line, the batter will be called out, the ball is dead. The designated line will be drawn approximately twenty four (24) feet 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 calls 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 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. Eject-ions**

An umpire may eject a player who threatens or uses abusive language directly or indirectly toward an umpire, player, or spectator. Umpires should submit a written report to the National League Committee Chairman 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 and will be subject to further disciplinary action. If a player attacks an umpire, player, or spectator, the Sun Cities Joint League Board suspends him from further play pending a decision on disciplinary action.

#### **9. Warm-up Pitches**

At the beginning of each inning, three (3) warm-ups or one (1) minute whichever comes first. Five (5) warm-up pitches will be allowed when a pitcher relieves another. Infield warm-up will be discontinued after the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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. Note: A player who misses four (5) successive games will be assigned to the replacement 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 scorekeepers responsibilities take precedence over any request to substitute as a player on another team.

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. If your team is involved, arrive early.**

**4. Resignation**

**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 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**

**Any player that uses a bat banned by the SCSSL or ASA or an altered bat that enhances its performance, is subject for 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.**

**National League Committee**

**Glen Carroll – Rules Coordinator**