



2018 PLAYING RULES AND REQUIREMENTS (2-15-18)

All UGSA playing rules and requirements are set forth below.

Sec. 1.- Conduct

All managers and coaches are responsible for their own conduct as well as that of their players, parents and fans. UGSA will provide a Code of Conduct guideline for all coaches, players, parents and fans. A team will be penalized for behavior and actions by its coaches, players, parents and fans that is not consistent with the UGSA Code of Conduct. Umpires have the right to take whatever action is necessary to uphold the integrity of the game and league. UGSA will review improper conduct and impose penalties and/or sanctions as needed.

Sec. 2.- Playing Requirements

A. All players must have a common uniform, including a shirt with numbers. No player can wear a school uniform or any other uniform that does not match that of her UGSA team. Metal cleats are not permitted.

B. Managers can option to bat all players on the team. 8U, 10U and 12U(Freedom only). Division teams have option to field 10 defensive players. If a team starts with 10 players, it must end with 10 players. The 10th player cannot be an infielder. 12U Liberty, 14U, and HS Divisions play with 3 outfielders.

C. A minimum of 8 players is needed to play an official game. A forfeit will occur when there are 7 or less players. A team may not finish a game with less than 8 players.

D. A substitute player may be used if agreed upon by the opposing manager if an injury or illness occurs during the game. If a player is removed for one of these reasons that player's batting position is skipped in the lineup and will not be ruled an automatic out. Any player scheduled to arrive late or one that needs to leave early must be identified and announced no later than at ground rules prior to game start. The late arriving player will be inserted at bottom of the lineup. A late arriving player not identified at ground rules will result in the disqualification of that player and an out will be recorded for each time that player is scheduled to bat during the game.

E. Each game will be played with a new ball and another ball in good condition supplied by the home team. A 12" fluorescent with a .47 C.O.R rating will be used in all divisions with the exception of the 8U and 10U divisions that will use an 11" ball.

F. Field dimensions are to be in accordance with PONY guidelines.

G. All batters and base runners must wear helmets with chinstraps. Protective gear

including catcher's gear must be NOCSAE stamped and approved. Any player removing her helmet while on base or in the field of play will be called out. Helmets must stay on until the player enters the dugout.

H. All catchers must wear catcher's helmets with extended throat protection helmet with throat guards or hockey style.

I. Under no circumstances may any player (coaches/managers excluded) warm up a pitcher without protective headgear that includes throat protection.

J. All batting lineups must be recorded in each team's record books indicating player's **first name, last name, and jersey number. Nicknames are NOT acceptable.**

K. Lineup cards must be filled out for umpire and opposing team prior to game start.

L. Only the **manager or acting manager** (designated at ground rules) is permitted to question the umpire on any rule interpretation or judgment call. Umpire calls involving balls, strikes, fair/foul balls, safe/out, etc. are not to be questioned whatsoever. Excessive questioning will result in automatic ejection at umpire's discretion of any manager, player, or fan in attendance at the game. Any protest to the umpire must be made before the next pitched ball. Ejections resulting from excessive questioning of balls as stated above will not be a appealable offense and sanctions will stand as stated on code of conduct.

M. All games are subject to video recording and the league is authorized to use/release said recordings for whatever purposes the league deems appropriate.

Sec. 3. Legal Players

A. Age Brackets. Player's age determined as of January 1st for the season to be played.

8U Division 10U Division 12U Division 14U Division High School Division

B. All teams must submit a player roster before season starts on forms supplied by UGSA.

C. All teams must have a roster comprised of players living within the team's **hometown drawing district**. The hometown drawing district can include players enrolled at a public or private school within that drawing district. Teams or organizations that overlap district boundaries **must** apply to the board for approval of players residing in intersecting districts.

D. All teams must represent a **hometown drawing district**, as defined in Sec. 3, Article C. Teams may apply for a re-districting of their "hometown" once every three years if necessary. In the event that two teams consider the same district as their own, the team with the longest continuously running charter in that district shall be considered the hometown drawing district team.

E. Up to 4 "accepted" players are permitted on any team in 8U, 10U, 12U, and 14U divisions. An "accepted" player must be clearly identified on the team roster form.

An "accepted" player shall be defined as:

i A player not considered part of a team's hometown drawing district even if that player has been on a team outside her hometown drawing district in the past.

ii A "B" level tournament enrolled player

F. "A" level tournament enrolled players are **not permitted** on any team in 8U, 10U, 12U or 14U. Any "B" or "C" level player who competes in three (3) "A" level tournaments within a calendar year will be considered an "A" level tournament player.

G. "B" level players are not permitted on any Freedom division team

H. HS Division **Only** Player Eligibility

i. An "A" level player may play for her hometown team and will not count as an accepted player. "A" level players may not play on any other roster or for any other town regardless of where she attends school.

ii Any "B" or "C" level player does not count as an accepted player provided she is playing the hometown she resides in or in the town where the high school she attends is located.

iii Up to 3 players outside of hometown drawing district are permitted on a HS team provided their hometown doesn't have a team. This must be board approved

I. No "accepted" players are permitted on a Freedom team. A team may apply for special consideration to appeal this rule pertaining to their team. There are certain requirements that will have to be met in order to be voted upon.

J. A player enrolled on a Liberty team may not play on another Liberty or a Freedom team within the same age division. However, a Freedom player may **guest** play on a Liberty team provided she is also listed on that roster prior to season commencement. Upon playing in the fifth (5th) game that player will be permanently rostered on the Liberty team and may not play back on the Freedom team. This must be brought to your Commissioner's attention prior to the games in which she is to play.

K. A player may play on only one team within the same age division. However, a player may guest play on a Freedom or Liberty team in a higher age division for four (4) games providing she is on the roster at the start of the season. Upon the start of the (5th) game that player will be permanently rostered on that team in the higher age division and is not permitted to play on lower age division. This must be brought to your Commissioners attention prior to the start of the games the player is playing.

L. A team roster may have no more than 16 players including substitute players for that season. Any additions to your roster after it has been submitted to UGSA must be board approved.

M. A final roster date will be before your 4th game your roster will be locked. Once the final roster date is reached the team roster cannot be changed or amended.

N. Any team participating in a game with a player not considered legal within UGSA by-laws will be subject to manager, coach, and/or team ejection from the UGSA.

O. ALL PLAYERS in every division must play at least 50% of regular season games to be eligible for playoffs

Sec.4 - Duration of Game

A. Game time start will be noted on all schedules. Rosters must be exchanged along with lineup cards to umpire no later than 10 minutes before game start. If the field is not ready for play 31 minutes after scheduled game start time the game can be rescheduled or played if both parties agree. A forfeit will be recorded if a team with a minimum of 8 players does not arrive within 30 minutes after a scheduled game start. Provided there are at least 8 players, umpire, and coach/adult the game will start no later than 30 minutes after its scheduled start time.

B. Games stopped due to rain or darkness and that have gone for at least 1 complete inning, but less than 5 innings (4 and ½ innings if home team is winning) will be considered incomplete and will resume play from the suspension until completed on a rescheduled date. Lightning strike rule is in effect. Visual lightning strike will delay game for 30 minutes. Umpire will stop play and relay procedures for clearing the field of play. Each lightning strike will restart the clock at 30 minutes until umpire gives the all clear. This is a NJ state rule and must be followed.

C. Games will have a duration of 7 innings in the 12, 14U and High School divisions. The 8U and 10U divisions will play 6 innings. No new inning may commence after 1 hour and 45 minutes has elapsed following game start time. A new inning commences when the third out is called at the bottom half of any inning. There will be an additional 15 minutes for unusual delays (e.g. rain, lightning, injury, etc.). Games played under lights must end no later than 10:50 pm.

D. In the event a scheduled umpire is 31 minutes late from game start time, the game can be rescheduled or if both managers agree a substitute umpire may be inserted.

E. Any game that ends due to time limit will be considered an official game with the score recorded as of the last full inning completed, no matter how many innings have been played.

F. Time permitting, tie games may continue for a maximum of 2 innings until a winner is declared. In the event time has still not elapsed after 2 extra innings have been completed the next and subsequent innings will be played under International Tie-Breaker rules until a winner is declared. Regular season games can end in a tie although all post-season games will be played until a winner is declared.

G. Managers must encourage their players to move quickly on and off the field between innings so as not to delay the game. Pitchers will be permitted 5 warm-up pitches between innings.

H. Any sight of lightning will stop play immediately and all player and coaches shall remove themselves from the field and to safety. The game will be considered suspended at that point and not continued until the umpire decides it is safe to resume play.

I. All post-season games will be played to completion of innings with no time limit limitation. Tie- breaker rules will also apply.

Sec.5.- Playing Rules

A. The U8 division will be coach pitch and follow Freedom rules and guidelines, except where stated below.

- a. Coaches pitch from the rubber. The coach pitching is not allowed to coach his team during play.
- b. 10 players in the field with four outfielders. One player as the defensive player will be placed to the right of left of the pitcher(coach) with at least one foot in the 8ft radius of the mound. Outfielders must start the play on the grass.
- c. No bunting, slapping, stealing, no infield fly, or dropped third strike.
- d. Base runners can't leave the base until the ball is hit into play.
- e. Play is stopped on a batted ball once any defensive player has control of ball inside the pitchers circle.
- f. A player can't advance(to any base) on an overthrow to the outfield. The ball will be deemed dead, and runners will stay on base. IF the ball is thrown out of play, the play is considered dead and the runner will advance one base.
- g. Each batter will be given a maximum of 5 pitches. NO balls or strikes will be called. If the ball has not been hit into play after 5 pitches, the batter is out. If the batter fouls the 5th pitch, they will receive another pitch, and will continue as long as they continue to foul the ball. Three strikes and you are out. A caught foul tip is handled as a strike unless it is hit above the batters head and caught; it is then considered an out.
- h. The catcher must be in true catchers position behind the plate.
- i. Innings are complete with 3 outs or a maximum of 5 runs.
- j. The last inning will be unlimited runs.
- k. Mercy rule is 10 runs after 5 innings.
- l. No other coaches other than the coach who is pitching will be allowed on the field. No defensive coaches will be allowed on the playing field.
- m. Games will be 6 innings.
- n. If the ball is hit and strikes the coach pitching, the play is considered dead. Baserunners return to original base, and batter assumes original pitch count.
- o. No composite bats are allowed.

B. U10 Freedom will have Modified Coach Pitch.

(1) If the pitch count gets to 4 balls on a batter a coach from the batter's team may deliver up to 3 additional pitches. If the batter does not put the ball into play after 3 coach pitches the batter is out. If the batter fouls off the 3rd pitch the batter can receive another pitch. Batter can continue batting if she continues to foul off pitches.

(2) Pitcher must remain in the pitchers circle on either side of the coach or behind the coach in order to field any hit balls.

(3) The current strike count on the batter remains the same when the coach takes over to pitch. Umpires will not call balls and strikes on any pitch from the coach. However, if the batter swings and misses a coach's pitch it will be a strike.

(4) There are no walks in Modified Coach Pitch.

(5) If the coach touches a batted ball while pitching the ball will be ruled dead. All runners will to their previous bases and the batter will receive another pitch.

(6) Coaches must not encourage players to wait until the coach takes over to pitch before swinging at pitches.

(7) No stealing or bunting is allowed while a coach is pitching.

(8) 10U Freedom Playoffs & Championship games will be player pitch

C. Infield fly rule is used in 12U, 14U and High School divisions only.

D. Stealing of any base is permitted in all divisions except 8U. In addition, 10U Liberty and Freedom divisions cannot advance to home plate unless on a batted ball, bases loaded walk, or hit by pitch. There are no continuous walks in the 8U or 10U divisions.

E. Base runners may not leave the base until ball is released from pitchers hand. Runners leaving a base before the ball is released from the pitcher's hand will be called out. Once the ball is put into play after being pitched it is considered a live ball and runners can advance until the pitcher receives and secures the ball within the pitching circle.

F. Drop third strike applies to all divisions except 8U and 10U.

G. An offensive player may not collide with a defensive player who has the ball in her possession or is waiting to make a play (e.g. catch, tag, throw, or force out). Any offensive player who, in the judgment of the umpire, collides with a defensive player waiting to make a play will be called out. Any offensive player that maliciously and intentionally runs in to a defensive player waiting to make a play will be ejected from the game and will be subject to the procedures of the UGSA by laws.

H. A courtesy runner with two outs (or 4 runs scored during a 5 run limit inning) in an inning is optional for pitcher on base and **mandatory for a catcher on base**. The courtesy runner shall be determined as the player who made the last recorded out.

I. Free substitution is permitted in all division. However, all re-entries must be inserted into their original slot in the batting order. A starter or substitute player may be re-entered only once in the lineup. DP FLEX player must be in 10th spot in lineup card and scorebook. It must be decided at ground rules if DP FLEX will be used.

J. A team will be permitted 3 defensive conferences per seven innings. On the 3rd conference the pitcher must be removed and replaced for the remainder of the game. There is one additional defensive conference permitted for each extra inning played. Changing pitchers is not considered a defensive conference.

K. A team will be permitted only one offensive conference per inning.

L. Fake tags (in order to deceive the runner) are not permitted and are considered unsportsmanlike conduct. Player and manager will be subject to ejection from game.

M. All base runners are bound under the obstruction rule.

N. Any player or manager that intentionally throws a batter any other equipment is subject to ejection. First offense-team warning, thereafter players will be called out by umpire.

O. Slide or Veer is in effect during all plays at any base. This must be brought up at ground rules and will serve as your first warning, the second can result in player ejection. Players are expected to be knowledgeable and versed on how to properly slide or veer.

P. Bunting is permitted in all divisions, except 8u. Fake-Bunt-Slap is not permitted in 8U or 10U division. Penalty for 1st offense is a warning. On 2nd offense player will be called out. No bunting is allowed in 10U Freedom while the coach is pitching.

Q. Slap hitting is allowed in 12U, 14U and HS divisions.

Sec. 6.- Runs and Scores.

A. There is a limit of 5 runs per inning or 3 outs whichever comes first

B. Last inning is unlimited when declared by umpire.

C. Mercy Rule: A team ahead by 10 or more runs after the 5th inning (4 ½ innings if home team is ahead) will be declared winner.

Sec. 7.- Pitching Regulations

A. Only windmill or sling shot style pitching will be permitted. Pitched ball must be made by underhand delivery.

B. Pitcher must have pivot foot in contact with the ground at all times up to and including ball release.

C. A pitcher can hit no more than 3 batters in one inning or a maximum of 5 batters for the entire game. Pitcher must be immediately replaced after hitting the 4th batter in an inning or 6th batter during the game.

D. For safety reasons there will be no pitching, fielding, or hitting activity in the live ball areas in the field during ground rules or pre-game meeting between umpire and managers.

E. 14U and High School division pitching distance is 43' feet.

Sec.8.- Game rescheduling.

A. Rescheduling must be done within guidelines established by UGSA. Managers must contact opposing team within 48 hours to reschedule.

B. All game changes must be presented to and approved by the division commissioner. Umpire cancellations and game re-scheduling will be the responsibility of the team manager. All contacts will be forwarded to the umpire and chief of UGSA.

C. Season start and ending dates will be announced at the managers meetings. For spring seasons, ALL games must be completed by deadline in order to be seeded properly. Any game cancellation due to weather related conditions must have a new makeup date given to the UGSA **no later than 48hrs after cancellation was made.** The schedule@ugsasoftball.com email MUST be contacted only after the final game date/time has been established. If an umpire arrives at a game that was not cancelled the team responsible for cancelling will pay the total umpire fee. Games not played by the dates given will be forfeited.

D. Once a game schedule has been entered into the system a team will have 48 hours to double check and make sure all game days, times, locations are correct. Following this the schedule will be considered FINAL. A \$25 fee will be charged for any changes made after the final schedule is established. Any and all changes must be sent to both schedule@ugsasoftball.com and the current President.

- i.. Spring Season: 2 non-weather related schedule changes are permitted .
- ii.. Fall Season: 3 non-weather related schedule changes are permitted.

E. Payment of Fines

i. **Spring:** Any team that is issued a fine during the Spring season will need to fulfill payment prior to its first playoff game. Failure to make payment will result in forfeiture of its playoff games.

ii. **Fall:** A team that is issued a fine in the Fall season will need to fulfill payment one (1) week prior to the next Spring season scheduling meeting (or next Fall season if it does not register in the next Spring season). Failure to make payment will result in ban of said team from scheduling in that season or any subsequent seasons.

iii. Fines that are assessed will be applied to the team and not the coach. This means if a coach steps down or moves to a different division the team will still need to satisfy its fines before participating in playoffs or registering for a new season.

F. Games changes must be in the following format or they will not be recorded;

Age division, home team/away team, original date/time/location, and change(s) to be made

G. Game day cancellations. Head coach MUST contact UIC by text, call or email as well as send email to appropriate addresses with the proper information. Failure to do so will result in team being responsible for payment to umpire that shows up for the game.

H. Scores- During spring season scores are to be sent to scores@ugsasoftball.com and must be sent within 48 hours. If a score isn't received, then a 1-1 tie will be entered. If a team wants this changed to the actual score a \$25 fee will be charged.. The score must be reported properly (.ie. divisions, teams, time) or it will not be recorded. During fall season reporting of game scores is not required because there are no playoffs. However, they can be reported if desired. **THE WINNING TEAM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR REPORTING THE SCORE**