

The following are specific “house rules” for managers, coaches and players of the Guilderland Girls Softball League (GGSL). The GGSL is an ASA associated Girls Softball League. Any procedure, policy or ruling not directly addressed in these “house rules” for Recreational League Play will be governed by the most recent version of the ASA Code.

Rule # 1 Batting:

- Every player must bat, whether a starter or substitute player.
- Continuous: Specifically, every player present at the start of the game (whether a starter or substitute) must be listed in a batting lineup. The entire batting lineup must be followed in a consecutive order with each player batting once before the leadoff batter (on player's team) comes to bat for the second time.
- Batting out of turn: Disputes involving any player batting out of turn will be decided by the umpire and in accordance with ASA guidelines. Since batting out of turn may cost your team a run or a turn at bat, it is suggested that you have a batting lineup posted in the dugout and or a bench coach keeping the players in order.

Rule # 2 No Automatic Outs:

- In our recreational league there are no automatic outs. If a player needs to leave a game due to injury or another commitment, the player's place in the batting order will be skipped without penalty of an automatic out.
- If a player is hurt during a turn at bat and is unable to complete that turn, the teammate who made the last out shall complete the injured player's at bat, using the existing ball and strike count. If the injured player is unable to return to the line-up, any of player's subsequent turns at bat will be skipped, without penalty of an automatic out.
- Please also see Rule #7 for information about the required minimum number of available players.

Rule # 3 Late Arriving Players:

- Games start when the first pitch is thrown. Any player arriving after the game has started is considered to be a late arriving player. Late players will automatically be placed at the bottom of the batting order. If the late player arrives after the leadoff batter (on player's team) comes to the plate for player's second at bat, the late player is ineligible to play; i.e., player is too late. This Rule does not apply to a player arriving late due to a school activity, but this player must be placed at the bottom of the batting order.

Rule # 4 Called-up Players:

- Plan ahead; try to have 10 players at each game. While a team may start a game with 8 players, it is the league's preference to have ten players on the field. A team of ten provides both a competitive environment and is an advantage to you to avoid a forfeit being declared if injuries or no shows drop your team below the required 8 players to play a game.

Called up players' rules:

- Must be GGSL players, but not taken from their own game at that time.
- Must be placed last in batting line up after your regular roster of players (Except that late arriving players must be placed last in the batting order after the called up players, if any).
- Must play three defensive innings.
- Must be called up from a lower division.
- May only pitch two (2) innings per game.
- The number of called up players may not exceed the number of permanent players.
- Should you unexpectedly end up with more than 10 players after calling up a player, then the players called up must be asked if they still want to play. If a called up player wants to play, they must play in accordance with this rule. The League recognizes the effort that both the called up player and parents made to travel to the park on your behalf.

Rule # 5 Player Participation Rules:

- Everyone bats & plays a defensive position.
- All players must play at least (3) three defensive innings per game.
- If a player is a substitute one game, then the player must start the next game unless player is absent or a late arriving player for that game.
- Players are limited to 2 innings at each defensive position. They must rotate and learn different positions. *Note – pitchers and catchers are limited to 3 innings per game at each position.*
- Each player must play at least one inning in the infield and one inning in the outfield.

- If a Manager or coach is able to and does not adhere to the limitations of this Rule, the game is subject to forfeit pursuant to Rule#23. The manager or coach responsible may be sanctioned pursuant to Rule#26.
- Managers need to comply with these provisions whenever possible. However, the League recognizes that it may not be possible if the game is shortened because of bad weather, the team has late arriving players because of a school activity or because of injury to a player who has to be removed from part of the game. In games shortened because of darkness, managers must make every effort to comply in their last defensive inning after the unlimited inning (the last inning) has been declared. The League also recognizes that a team may not be able to comply because circumstances may be such that the team does not play a defensive inning after the unlimited inning is declared.

Rule # 6 Fourth Outfielder:

Must be used in the following manner:

- Four across format i.e.: LF. LC. RC.RF.
- Not in direct line with 2nd base prior to the pitcher's release.
- Must be on the grass.
- The intent of this rule is to get another player in the game, and not to create an advantage for the defensive team.

Rule # 7 Minimum Team Players:

- GGSL will allow a game to be played with a minimum of 8 players. Once the number of players drops below 8 players due to injuries or no shows, the game will be declared a forfeit. It is suggested that all managers plan ahead and use called-up players to insure that they can field a team with at least ten players.

Rule # 8 Pitching Guidelines:

- The pitching distance will be 35 feet.
- Players are limited to three innings per game as a pitcher. Called-up players are limited to two (2) innings per game as a pitcher.
- Innings will be tracked in full inning increments. 1 pitch = 1 inning.
- Players pitch until a legal ball four count, the batter hits a ball in fair territory, or the batter strikes out.
- On ball four counts, a coach from the batter's team takes over, and the batter gets 3 additional pitches.
- Batter either puts the ball in play or strikes out when Player pitches. Batter is out if they do not put the ball in play after the coach's 3 additional pitches. Player cannot be called out on a foul ball when the coaches pitch, unless the out is a result of a defensive put-out.
- When coaches pitch, the previous strike count continues.
- No walks allowed. Focus and emphasis on the hitting concept, thus increasing more fielding opportunities with the end result being a faster and more exciting game.
- Coaches as well as players must pitch from pitching rubber.
- When a coach enters the game to pitch, the player who was pitching will continue to field the pitcher's position defensively. The player must have at least one foot inside the pitcher's circle when the coach delivers a pitch to the batter.
- If a batted ball strikes or is touched by a coach who is pitching, it shall be ruled a dead ball. The batter must continue the at-bat, and the dead ball will not count as a pitch toward the three pitch limit. A base runner may not advance to the next base on the dead ball.
- Mound Visits: Visits to the Pitching Mound by the manager or coach: Consistent with the instructional nature of the GGSL, a Manager or coach may visit the mound to give instructions once per inning per pitcher without having to remove the pitcher. The pitcher must be removed on the second visit in any particular inning. There is no per game limit on mound visits, only pitcher per inning limits as set forth above.
- Pitcher Hits Batter: If the Pitcher hits 3 batters with a pitched ball in one inning, the player will be removed from the pitching position for that inning. If the same pitcher hits 2 batters in any following inning with a pitched ball, that player shall be removed from the pitching position and cannot be re-entered into the game as a pitcher.

Rule # 9 Injuries to Players:

- Please do not ask an injured player to continue to play for the good of the team. Your only concern should be for the welfare of the player above the outcome of the game.
- Returning to the Game: Since GGSL uses a continuous batting order and multiple substitutions, an injured player (if okay) can return to the lineup.

- If a player incurs a minor injury, puts ice on it between innings while in the dugout, is still able to play the defensive field and takes her regular turn at bat, then that player may stay in the lineup.
- If the removal of a player due to injury drops the team below the minimum of 8 players and there are no substitutes available, then the game will be declared a forfeit.
- Managers should plan ahead and use called-up players to field a team of at least 10 players.

Rule # 10 Bunting:

- A batter is allowed to bunt off a player-pitcher, but only if said player has been first instructed on the proper fundamentals on how to bunt. Absolutely no bunting is allowed when a coach is pitching.

Rule # 11 Dropped Third Strike:

- A batter who strikes out cannot run to 1st base when the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground.

Rule # 12 Official Game:

- A game shall consist of six (6) innings, unless it reaches the time limit or is suspended for darkness or weather.
- A game is official after 3½ innings if the home team is winning, 4 if visitor is winning.
- Any game called off by the umpire due to rain or the mercy rule and has passed the official mark will be deemed a completed game even if there was no unlimited inning played.
- If a game is suspended prior to becoming an official game and is rescheduled, it will be replayed from the start.

Rule #13 Mercy Rule:

- Game is declared over when two criteria are met:
- Team is ahead of opponent by 15 runs; and
- The game has reached the official inning mark in rule 12.

Rule # 14 Run Limits and Unlimited last Inning:

- Maximum Runs per regular innings and last inning shall be: 3 runs max per inning, except last inning unlimited.

Rule # 15 Game Time Limits/Playoff Rules/Umpires:

All Weekend Games: 2-hour Game Time Limit/1-hour 30-Minute Automatic Declaration of Last and Unlimited Inning:

- The intent of this rule is to allow us to get all 10AM and 12:30PM (and 3:00PM if another game is scheduled immediately afterward) Saturday or Sunday games played and get the fields cleared, and provide sufficient time for teams to warm up and start the next scheduled game on time. All Saturday or Sunday games that have another game scheduled immediately afterward shall not exceed 2 hours unless it is to complete an inning in progress. At the 1 hour and 30 minute point, the next inning (regardless of what inning you're in) will automatically be declared both the last inning and the unlimited run inning.

Example:

- A. You completed four innings;
- B. You're at the 1 hour 30 minute point....**RULING:** Then the fifth inning becomes the last and unlimited run inning.

Exception: If the current inning you're in;

- A. Started prior to the 1 hour and 30 minute point,
- B. Was not declared the last or unlimited inning,
- C. Ended at the 2 hour plus point.

RULING:

- Then you will still have to play the unlimited run inning (even though it is past the 2 hour point) since no unlimited run inning was declared.
- The 2-hour policy begins from the time the game actually starts, not the scheduled time.
- i.e.: Scheduled time 12:30PM, Game delayed and starts at 12:45PM. Two-hour mark is 2:45PM.

WEEKDAY GAMES:

At the one hour and 20 minute point, the next inning (regardless of what inning you're in) will automatically be declared the last and unlimited inning.

Playoff Rules:

- Unless otherwise specifically provided herein, the time limitations set forth in Rules # 15 and #16 apply to all Playoff games.

Umpires:

- If a full crew of assigned ASA umpires is not available to start all games at their scheduled start time, the ASA umpires who have arrived will be distributed to allow all scheduled games to start as close to their scheduled start time as possible, even if it means starting Triple A and Majors division games with a single ASA umpire. If there are not sufficient ASA umpires available to start all of the games, the available ASA umpires shall be assigned to the games in the Majors division first, the Triple A division second and the Double A division third. Volunteer umpires may be recruited and used to start any game, subject to replacement when the ASA umpire(s) arrive(s). The volunteer umpire must be acceptable to both managers. Because of safety reasons, volunteer umpires shall call balls and strikes from behind the pitcher's mound. Managers may not protest a game as a result of any call made by a volunteer umpire, and must work cooperatively to address any areas of dispute that arise during a volunteer umpire's tenure. The acting Duty Officer shall monitor the distribution of the available ASA umpires and the use of volunteer umpires. The acting Duty Officer will not serve as a volunteer umpire.

Rule # 16 Unlimited Run Last Inning:

- During weeknight games only, the unlimited inning will be declared no later than at the top of the next inning following the 1 hour and 20 minute mark from the actual start of the game. All Double A games will end at 8:00pm, regardless of the inning in progress. However, the game cannot end because of the 8:00 weeknight rule until the player who is batting (has stepped into the batter's box before the umpire declares that it is 8:00) has completed the at bat. Weeknight games as used in this context do not include Friday night games or games on a night in which there is no school the following day, in this case Rule #15 for Weekend Games applies.

Rule #17 Tie Breaker:

- Time and conditions permitting, we will play ASA rules, International Tie Breaker.
- Weeknight game: Ultimately this decision becomes an umpire judgment call, based on the ability to get the tiebreaker in prior to 8:00.

Rule # 18 Standings:

- No standings will be kept. At the end of the season, there will be a single elimination playoff round to determine a league champion. Playoff seeding is determined by the records of the teams in their last 2 league games. The league will award individual championship trophies to the winners.

Rule # 19 Leading Off Base:

- Leading is permitted only after the pitcher releases the ball.

Rule # 20 Stealing:

- Stealing is allowed during ANY inning, but cannot be done while a coach is pitching. A base runner may steal second and/or third base, but not home and only one base per pitch. The runner cannot advance an additional base on a defensive error committed during the steal attempt. Delayed stealing is not allowed.
 - o Example 1 - If a player steals third and catcher's throw goes into left field, the player must remain on third.
 - o Example 2 - If a player takes a big lead at third and a catcher's pickoff throw goes into left field, then player must remain on third. If player is caught in a rundown and gets safely home, then player must still return to third.

Rule # 21 Sliding:

- It is the league's position that sliding may be used only after the players have first been instructed in the proper technique. A player who is not comfortable sliding should not be forced to slide.

- If a play is being made on a runner at any base, the runner must make an attempt to avoid the tag by sliding or dodging the tag.
- It is Mandatory that collisions with catchers or pitchers covering home be avoided with violations causing the runner to be declared out by the umpire. Exception: in accordance with ASA Rules, a catcher may not block home plate unless they possess or are about to receive a batted or thrown ball to make a play at the plate. A catcher blocking the plate in any other circumstance will result in the runner being called safe.

Rule # 22 Runners and Advancing Base to Base:

- Runners who are less than halfway to the next base and when an infielder has control of the ball and is attempting to throw the ball back to the pitcher, shall return to the previous base without liability to be put out. Runners more than halfway can continue to the next base (with the risk of being put out) even if it is home plate. It is solely the umpire's judgment whether or not the player was halfway to the next base.

Rule # 23 Protested and Forfeited Games:

Protested Games:

- Per ASA rules, you cannot protest umpire judgment calls, only rules interpretations. Any manager who wants to protest a game must make it known to the umpire at the time of the incident. After the game, the manager must also advise the duty officer and record it in the log book specifically setting forth the rule determination being challenged.

Forfeited Games:

- If it is determined that a team manager has violated Rule #5 in that the manager has not played all players in his game lineup at least one inning in the outfield and one inning in the infield (with the exception of the pitcher or catcher and the "sit" exception in the majors division) in any game, or if it is determined that a team manager has violated Rule # 8 in that the manager has used a pitcher for more innings than allowed, that manager's team shall forfeit the game in which the violation took place. If such action by the manager is blatant, the manager may be subject to sanction as set forth in Rule # 26.
- All decisions regarding the protested or forfeited games will be decided by vote of the GGSL Executive Board.

Rule # 24 Infield Fly Rule:

- Not Applicable

Rule # 25 Field Responsibility:

- Both teams are responsible for having a parent in the Concession stand 30 minutes prior to the start of the game and continuing throughout the game until 30 minutes after the game ends (for cleanup and restocking) and dismissal by the Concession Stand Supervisor.
- It is the responsibility of both managers to clean the dugouts after the game.
- *PRE GAME WARM UPS*. More often than not, two teams are using the same field to warm up. This usually results in some 20 or more players and coaches batting, throwing and catching. Providing a safe environment for all players should be every manager and coach's objective.

Rule # 26 Conduct (Managers, Coaches, and Players):

- Managers are responsible for controlling the conduct of their players in the dugout and on the field. Under no circumstances may a manager or coach address any remark to a manager, coach or player of the opposing team, or an umpire that may be interpreted as derogatory.
- No manager or coach whose team is in a defensive position may be on the field (inside the fence) while the game is being played.
- All comments, cheering, words of encouragement, or any other form of verbal communication by your team may only be directed at another member of your team. We rely on the manager's common sense and fairness to limit the loudness of some cheering which at times is disruptive to the opposing pitcher or batter.
- The scope of the managers' responsibility also includes preventing such actions as rattling or climbing on the dugout fence, or pounding on dugouts with bats or balls. If an umpire feels that any of the conduct detailed above is being violated, then the umpire shall caution the manager to take the necessary action to remedy the problem. Should the manager be unable to control the problem, the umpire may declare a forfeit in favor of the opposing team.
- All violations should be reported to the league president.

Manager or Coach Sanction:

- If a Manager or Coach has demonstrated behavior detrimental to the GGSL League or has shown a blatant disregard for the GGSL Rules, the Executive Board will determine whether an immediate suspension of such Manager or Coach from participation in the GGSL is in order. All Managers or Coaches so suspended are subject to Removal from managing or coaching by majority vote of the GGSL Board.

Rule # 27 Uniforms and Equipment:

- Will wear league-provided uniform hats.
- Helmets: Players must wear helmets with satisfactory NOCSAE-approved face cages when batting and running the bases. The home plate umpire will have the authority to reject any helmet they determine to be unsafe. GGSL will provide helmets with NOCSAE-approved face cages for all players to use during games.
- Uniforms: Uniform shirts provided by GGSL. All players must wear BLACK uniform pants (self-provided).
- Bats and all other playing equipment must meet ASA standards.
- Metal spikes are NOT permitted in any GGSL division game.

Rule # 28 Practice Sessions:

- Left to discretion of the manager and coaches. Consideration should be given to the amount of practices and reasonable time limits during the week due to school schedules.

Rule # 29 Division Eligibility:

- Guilderland Girls Softball League Divisions - A player's grade level in the school year directly preceding the GGSL Recreational season determines the division in which the player is eligible to play in that season.
- Example: A player in grade 5 in September 2015 will be considered to be in grade 5 and eligible to play in the Double A division in the 2016 GGSL Recreational season.
- Double A Division (classification): A player in Grades 4-5;
 - a) Players of younger grade classification may play in older grade divisions upon request, and with GGSL Executive Board approval.
 - b) Players of younger grade classification may be utilized as called up players to an older grade division. Please refer to Rule 4 for additional information.

Rule # 30 Rescheduling Games:

- Prior approval of the Division Commissioner is required for rescheduling games for reasons other than rainouts.
- Rescheduling must be set at a mutually agreed upon date and time between the team managers. Team managers do not have the authority to cancel games by themselves. The manager requesting the rescheduling must make arrangements with the opposing team manager and Division Commissioner and request the League Scheduler to coordinate the Umpires, Field Reservation and Field Preparation.
- Rescheduling of all games is at the sole discretion of the league's scheduler. If a mutually agreed upon date and time cannot be arranged, the game must be played according to the original schedule or the team that no-shows will forfeit the game.

Rule # 31 SAFETY:

- All pitchers MUST wear a pitcher's face mask when pitching to a batter or fielding the pitching position.
- All players MUST wear a fielder's face mask when playing a defensive position on the field.