

SCGSL 2023 Game Rules

(amended 2/3/23)

The South Central Girls Softball League **provides play for teams in support of improving area high school programs**. Accordingly each age division has as its purpose the following:

- **U10 and U12 teach competitive fastpitch softball**
- **U14 teaches and prepares players for high school competition**
- **U16 and U18 prepares players for JV and Varsity action**

We encourage area communities to provide all ages opportunities to play competitive softball if their skill level is appropriate. Teams are required to be composed of players from the same school district (no travel teams or teams of players from mixed communities).

We have crafted rules making it easier for our coaches to play as many girls each game as possible. While not perfectly following NFHS/WIAA rules, we intend to maintain all NFHS/WIAA rules except those changes approved by the **Board of Directors**. Minimizing rules deviations maintains consistency for the players, coaches and umpires.

U10, U12, U14, HS (U16/U18) will follow NFHS/WIAA rules unless noted below.

Qualifications to Play in SCGSL:

- 1. Players must either live or attend school in the district where the team they are playing for is located. When there is more than one high school in a district the teams make up should reflect the high school they will be attending. Any requests for an exception to this rule must be submitted in writing to the South Central gmail address for Board consideration.**

Coaches are required to submit one of the following forms of proof of eligibility for players that don't have an address that clearly shows they are in a specific district (i.e., a player who school choices into a district other than where they live or a player who has an address in Verona, but is in the Middleton School District).

- ***A copy of the players current year report card***
- ***Copy of their student ID***
- ***Signed letter.....***
- ***A copy of the parents property tax statement that shows the school district (actual property tax information can be blacked out) we just need to see family name and address and school district.***

Rostering Teams:

1. Players can play up or down **during the regular season** as long as they are age eligible. Players playing for multiple teams in a community should only be done in order to ensure a team has enough players to compete - if it is discovered this is being done to provide a competitive advantage the Board will take action against that community.

2. **Substitute players & Rosters:**
 - All substitute players must be rostered SCGSL players
 - Any substitute players may only play the OF and must bat last in the order and are NOT allowed to pitch.
 - No substitute players will be allowed during play-offs or Championship play. Only players on your official submitted roster are allowed to play those games.
 - Changes made to rosters after the roster deadline (for 2023: April 21st) there will be a \$10 charge per team bill through SportsEngine.

3. **Age Waiver:**

Each team is limited to 2 age waiver requests. Pitchers are ineligible to take part in the age waiver. Communities that abuse and/or are untruthful about player position may lose the ability to participate in the age waiver program for up to 2 playing seasons.

For example: You have a 6th grader who turns 13 in the fall of their 6th grade year, before January 1 of that school year - a waiver can be completed to allow them to play at U12 with their 6th grade classmates. This waiver is not allowed to be used for a player who is a grade and year older to "play down". For example a 7th grader who is 13 cannot complete this waiver to play at the U12 level. Player skill level is a non-factor in waiver decisions. The waiver policy was created to avoid punishing kids who are older than most of their grade (i.e., fall birthdays).

An age waiver form must be filled out and turned in along with the team Roster form. A copy of that form is located on our website at www.scssoftball.org.

Sportsmanship Rules

The SCGSL Board requires good sportsmanship from all coaches, players, umpires and fans. There should not at any time be any swearing or inappropriate conduct towards other coaches, players, fans or umpires.

Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their fans - any inappropriate behavior towards the opposing team or umpires will result in SCGSL taking action towards the team.

Sportsmanship Rules (cont.)

Chanting/Cheering:

- Teams may cheer on their players while at bat or support their pitcher with encouraging words.
- Any cheers and chants should be appropriate and clean.
- Any cheering/chanting from the dugout MUST cease once the opposing pitcher walks towards and steps on the pitching plate.
- Under NO circumstances is chanting at the opposing teams pitchers or batters allowed - this is considered highly unsportsmanlike conduct.
- No cowbells, drumming on buckets, etc., is allowed from the dugout or the fans.

IF a team is repeatedly reported to the SCGSL Board for unsportsmanlike conduct, the Board will take action that could affect the team's ability to continue playing in the league and/or being ineligible for Championship play. In which case, no refunds for the league will be given.

Transgender Policy:

South Central Girls Softball League will follow in accordance with the WIAA Transgender Participation Policy as follows:

<https://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Eligibility/WIAAtransgenderpolicy.pdf>

Game Play Rules:

1. **Each team will need a minimum of 7 age-eligible players to start a game.** After the game has started, a newly arrived player will be added to the end of the batting order as last batter. If a team has six or less players, they forfeit, but it is suggested that one team donate players to allow the game to be played. Since players, coaches, umpires & fans are in attendance, playing the game benefits those in attendance. A forfeit does not provide playing time for anyone. During the regular season, Teams are allowed to borrow from their other community teams within the same level in order to make up a roster of up to 9 players - Abuses of this rule for the purpose of a competitive edge will not be tolerated and may result in forfeiture.
2. **If a doubleheader is played against a divisional opponent, the game or games that count in the standings must be designated and agreed upon by BOTH Coaches.** Each doubleheader game is required to be at least 5 innings.

Game Play Rules (cont.)

3. **Teams MUST provide a batting order up to their full roster of players.** This line-up must include the following:
 - Players first & last name
 - Players number
 - If you have a substitute player from a different SC team in your community this must be disclosed on your line-up to the opposing team.

However once the order is decided at the pre-game meeting with the umpires, changes are not permitted except as specified in Rule 2 (starting the game with less than 9 players). Abuses of this rule for the purpose of a competitive edge will not be tolerated and may result in forfeiture.

4. Head coaches may request a copy of the original team roster from the SCGSL Board for comparison to the line-up they were given if a question arises regarding player substitution.
5. **If a team chooses to bat more than 9 players,** free substitution can be used. Which means defensively, any player may enter the game at any time for any number of times and at any number of positions. The defensive alignment has nothing to do with the batting order. Otherwise, If a team chooses to use a line-up of 9 players (10 including DP/Flex), standard NFHS/WIAA substitution rules will apply.
6. **Pitchers and catchers are permitted to have courtesy runners.** The last out prior to the batter will be the runner. If that runner cannot perform then the next previous batting out will be the courtesy runner.
7. **Any player not able to perform,** will be dropped from the batting order (not an out) and cannot bat or play defense the remainder of the game.
8. **All levels will use 9 defensive players ONLY - this includes U10.**
9. **Cleats:** All U10 and U12 players must wear composite cleats. U14 and U16/18 may wear metal cleats. No metal cleats are allowed in U10 or U12.
10. **NFHS/WIAA/ASA pitching distances will be used: U10 is 35' and U12 is 40'. U14, HS (U16/U18) is 43'. We will be using NFHS/WIAA mechanics for ALL levels. The difference being the pitcher does not need to start with both feet on the pitching rubber and can take a step back with the non-pivot foot.** 12" ball will be used for U12, U14 and HS (U16/U18). 11" ball will be used for U10.

Additional U10 only rules:

- Only 3 Outfielders will be allowed on the field.
- Outfielders must start on the grass at the beginning of every pitch.

Additional U10 only rules (cont.):

- Batter's **MAY NOT** show bunt and then take back and swing. If this occurs, the batter will be called out.
- No dropped third strike. The batter is out.
- No stealing of Home Plate unless there is a play or an attempt at a play to 3rd base.
 - Runner may NOT advance to Home on a passed ball, Wild Pitch or an attempted throw down
 - to 1st or 2nd. Otherwise, all other normal base running rules apply.
- Stealing/leading off of other bases will not be allowed until the ball crosses home plate.
- If a batter is hit by a pitch, this is **NOT** considered a walk by the pitcher and **DOES NOT** implement the Coach Pitch Rule. The batter will take her base, regardless of how many bases are occupied or if it walks a run in. The pitcher will continue pitching to the next batter and play will continue.

U10 Coach Pitch Rule: No walking with the bases loaded. Offensive coach will come in to pitch after the pitcher has thrown 4 balls, **ONLY when the bases are loaded**. The hitter is allowed the number of swings as strikes remaining to put a ball in play. The pitcher then starts up again when the next batter enters the batter box. No stealing or bunting is allowed while a coach is pitching.

NOTE: *When a pitcher is struggling coaches SHOULD NOT instruct their players to just stand in the batters box and wait to get walked so the coach can come in and throw a meatball pitch. This is NOT good sportsmanship. Abuses of the Coach Pitch rule will result in it not being offered in future seasons.*

Run ahead rule:

1. **NFHS/WIAA rule of 10 runs after 5 innings for ALL levels.** The WIAA rule of 15 after 3 will not be used unless agreed upon by both coaches. **This is not an umpire decision to enforce other run ahead rules.**
 - a. U10 - Each inning is over after 3 outs or 5 runs are scored, whichever comes first.
 - b. U12 - Each inning is over after 3 outs or 8 runs are scored, whichever comes first.
 - c. U14 - Each inning is over after 3 outs or 10 runs are scored, whichever comes first.

Game Time Limits & Scores:

1. **Times Limits**
 - a. For all age groups (U10 thru U16/18): No new inning may start after 90 minutes after the game start time.
2. **The scores** of the divisional games are to be reported on SportsEngine within 24 hours of the games completion.
3. **There will be no Ties in SC play.**
 - a. Tie games at the end of the time limit (U10 and U12) OR after 7 innings **will commence with the last previous out at second base to start each extra inning (International Tie-breaker rule).**

Umpires:

1. **Home teams are responsible for finding and paying the Umpires for regular season games.** PLEASE contact a Board member if there are any issues with officials not following SCGSL rules. Failure to use the required umpires as listed below may result in forfeiture of the game by the home team as determined by the board.
 - a. **U10 games:** A certified umpire behind the plate is preferred, however, if one is not available due to other community games, a high school age official that has attended an umpire clinic OR parent is okay. **Any person acting as an umpire behind the plate must be geared up with protective clothing.**
 - b. **U12/U14 games require a WIAA or ASA registered umpire behind the plate.** For the base umpire you may use a high school age official that has been to an umpire clinic OR a parent.
 - c. **HS (U16/U18) games require two WIAA or ASA registered umpires.**
 - d. **Recommended rates for registered umpires are \$40.00 per game. For double headers, each team is responsible for paying the umpires for one game.** Pay for un-registered umpires for U10/U12/U14 games can be negotiated by the Home team.

Rainout Rules

1. **Calling the game off because of a rainout before the game has started is the Home Team responsibility. Once the game has started it is up to the umpires.** Rescheduling the game in either case is the home team's responsibility and must be mutually agreed upon by BOTH Coaches.
 - a. If a re-schedule date cannot be agreed upon by both coaches, the league reserves the right to determine a forfeit by one of the teams involved.

Rainout Rules Once Play has Started:

SCGSL will play in accordance with the WIAA rainout rules.

Our rules have been modified to fit our time limit rules:

- **U10 thru U16/18:** Must complete 60 minutes of play in the event of rain for the game to be considered complete.
- If the game doesn't reach the above time requirement, it must be completed on a different day, picking up where it was left off and played to the full time limit of the game (90 minutes for U10, U12, U14 & U16/18) **OR** run rule.
- Both Coaches must agree on a time and day immediately after the rainout is called.
- In the event the game needs to be completed on an alternate date - the rosters must stay the same - no new players may be added. You may only bat the players listed on your roster. If you are batting a straight nine all subs (and DP/Flex) must be listed or they will not be allowed play in game completion due to rain.

Special Equipment Exception

- Per the vote taken during the 2021 Rules Meeting on April 8, 2021 (and amended 3/22), any team in SCGSL is allowed to use the Blast Motion equipment on the end of their bats; however, under no circumstances can the data be analyzed during the game either in the dugout or by spectators. Used in this capacity, the equipment in no way gives teams any playing advantage and only allows them to help players make corrections to their swing during their team practices.

****NEW Playoff Games**

1. All playoff teams are announced by the SCGSL Board and emailed out to all coaches and coordinators.
2. In the event of a tie in the division deciding factors will be handled as followed:
 - a. Head to head
 - b. Runs allowed
 - c. Runs score
 - d. Coin flip
3. All playoff games must be played on the Wednesday or Thursday before the week of the Championship game. Rainout date will be Friday at the latest. This applies to ALL age groups and divisions.
 - a. These dates will be given at the beginning of each season.
4. Home team will be determined by a coin flip prior to the game starting.
5. Hosting team is responsible for scheduling umpires for the game.
6. BOTH playoff teams are responsible for paying for the umpires 50/50.

Championship Night:

Championship Night will be played by the teams who win their division playoff game. Medals will be awarded for 1st & 2nd place (to players only). All league rules will apply for these games EXCEPT there will be **no time limit**.

- The league will set the date for the Championship Games and communicate the dates of the games during registration time. The league will provide the fields and the umpires for these games - they are currently held in Middleton.
- If any division has more than two divisions, there will need to be a playoff game prior to championship game night. The league will determine who needs to play in any playoff games. **NOTE – Divisions determined to be in this situation at the Scheduling meeting should reserve the week prior to the championship games for this.**
- If the team eligible to play in any playoff game or championship game CANNOT play in the game, notice must be given to the league a week in advance. The league will then determine the next team eligible to play in the playoff game or championship game and notify them as soon as possible.
- **Rosters will be checked for ALL championship games.**

Please continue to encourage good sportsmanship from your players, coaches and fans. Problems should be reported to the Board and continued bad behavior will not be tolerated. Players or coaches could face sanctions up to and including termination of your right to participate in the South Central Girls Softball League.

Other rules for each age group may be added by the Board of Directors as they see fit. Any proposed changes of the above stated rules or policies must be presented to the **Board of Directors** at a **regular meeting** prior to the start of the season.

Additional Fall Softball Rules & Information:

1. TBD per team fee to play and registration will be through the SC website - Registration for fall opens after July 1st. (This may be a floating date)
2. All rules from the summer league will still be in place, there will be no roster checks but hope that everyone will be honest as this is still a community-based fall league.
3. As this is community-based - no club travel teams - however if 2 communities need to combine to have enough players that will be allowed (for fall only)
4. Communities must provide us proof of insurance for teams to play (either copies of USA softball cards or community program insurance) - we want to make sure all of the girls are covered and safe.
5. We will NOT be keeping scores for games or standings.
6. Games will be doubleheaders on Sunday - U16/18 in the morning from 9-noon and U10-U14 in the afternoon, as early as 12 p.m. (noon).
7. Games start the Sunday after Labor Day and run for 6 weeks.
8. Drop dead time limit on the games - 75 minutes.
9. 1 plate umpire required.
10. Each team will pay the umpire for a game - so home pays one game and away pays the other - must be paid day of to the umpire at \$50 per game each week - no exceptions.
11. SC will put together a schedule based on weekends teams and host sites are available. Any changes thereafter will need to be made by the coaches directly with other team.
12. Consideration to minimize travel distance will be given, but can't be guaranteed.
13. If you have a team that wants to play, but don't have a home field to play on you will be able to indicate that when registering and we will work with you to ensure you have a place to play.
14. If there are certain weeks your team is not available to play (i.e. homecoming weekend for HS teams) please indicate that when registering.