

# SOUTH JERSEY GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION, INC.

## 2011 RULES AND REGULATIONS

### I. BASIS

- A. All S.J.G.S.A. Divisions will be following the rules set forth by the National Softball Association (NSA) in their rulebook, unless otherwise changed or altered by the following amendments or descriptions.

### II. CONDUCT

- A. All Managers and Coaches are to be reminded and also remind their players, parents and fans of maintaining a proper code of conduct when at games. Managers are responsible for their team, which includes their fans. The team can be penalized due to unruly behavior by their fans. The umpires have complete control of each game from beginning until completion of the game. The umpire has the right to take whatever action is necessary in order to uphold the dignity of the game.

### III. PLAYING REQUIREMENTS

- A. All players must have a common uniform, including a shirt (with numbers), pants/shorts, and socks/stirrups. A player may be permitted to wear her High School pants/shorts during a game (cannot wear High School shirt). Hats/headbands are optional.
- B. There will be nine (9) players on the field with a manager's option to bat eleven (11) players in the Senior I, Senior II, Junior Olympic, Junior National, and Junior American. There will be ten (10) players on the field with a manager's option to bat twelve (12) players in the Junior Patriot, Major and Minor divisions. A minimum of eight (8) players is needed to play an official game, forfeits occur with only seven (7) or less players. Teams may not finish a game with less than eight (8) players. An ineligible substitute (as chosen by the opposing Manager) may be used if injury or illness occurs and the team will only have seven (7) players left. If a player is removed from the game (illness or injury) and no substitute is available, **that player's batting position is passed over (not an out).**
- C. Each game will be played with one (1) new ball and one (1) good conditioned ball (acceptable to umpire) provided by the Home Team. Each team must use a 12- inch .47 maximum core ball with a leather cover. Minor division will use an 11-inch ball. Game balls must be the same color and manufacturer.
- D. Dimensions of field (see NSA Rule Book).
- E. All batters and base runners must wear protective helmets with cages. Helmets will not be removed while ball is alive. Base runners removing helmets while ball is alive will be called out.
- F. Catchers must wear a throat guard and headgear or a hockey style mask in addition to the regular catcher's gear.
- G. Under no circumstance will any player warm up a pitcher without at least protective headgear, mask and throat guard. This does not apply to Managers and Coaches.
- H. **All batting lineups will be recorded in all record books showing first name, last name and uniform number for each player.**
- I. At no time will anyone but the Manager (or such person who has been designated as the Manager in the absence of the regular Manager) be permitted to question the umpire on any rule interpretation. Judgment calls, balls and strikes, fair, foul, safe, out etc. cannot be questioned. Excessive questioning will result in ejection. Problems with umpires must be formally submitted to Division Commissioners.

#### **IV. DURATION OF GAME & GAME TIMING**

- A. Games start at 6:15pm or 8:15pm or as designated on the schedule. Rosters must be exchanged no later than five minutes before game time. A forfeit will be recorded if a team is not present thirty-one minutes after game time. If a field is not available for use within thirty minutes of game time, the game may be rescheduled or played if both parties agree. (Also see IV. SECTION E) if there are a minimum of eight players, adult supervision (roster coach) and at least one umpire (regular season), the game must start.**
- B. Games stopped due to rain or darkness and that have gone at least one full inning, but less than five innings (4 ½ innings if home team is winning), will be considered incomplete and will be played from the point of suspension until completion (Also see IV. Section F).**
- C. Games consist of seven (7) innings (six (6) innings for the Minor Division). However, no new inning can start after an hour and forty-five minute (1hr 45 min) time limit has been reached from the start of the game. (Major, Junior, Senior) If at 1hr 30min. the game is tie and home team has finished batting, start the International Tie Rule at the top of the next inning, regardless of innings played. (Does not apply to play-offs). A new inning starts after a third out of the previous inning. There will be an additional fifteen minutes allowed for unusual delay, i.e., injury, rain. Games under the lights will not be permitted to start a new inning after 10:50 pm. Lights may be used to finish up any game as long as time permits.**
- D. If the umpire is late (thirty-one (31) minutes from game time), the game may be rescheduled, played when umpire arrives (if both Managers agree to play) or played with a qualified substitute umpire if available (if both managers agree).**
- E. Any game stopped because of a time limit will be an official game regardless of innings played, as of the last completed inning.**
- F. Tie games will be decided by the International Tie Breaker at the end of (7) seven innings or when last inning is declared, except for the Minor division. Minor division tie games may go extra innings if time permits, otherwise, the game should be resumed at the next official game between the two teams at the point of termination with the closest possible line up.**
- G. Managers will see that their players quickly leave the field between innings in order not to delay the playing of the game (NSA Rule Book allows only one minute, pitchers are only permitted five warm up pitches between innings).**
- H. Any sight of lightning will immediately suspend the game (delay). All persons should remove themselves from the field immediately. (Also see IV Sections B and C).**
- I. All Play-off games will be played to completion, a full seven (7) innings or extra innings if necessary. There will be no time limit in any play-off game. The ten run rule will be in effect for all play-off games. Any game not completed will be completed before the start of the next game.**

## V. PLAYING RULES

- A. Infield fly rule is used (See NSA Rule Book) in all divisions, except the Minor Division.
- B. Stealing is permitted in all divisions.
  - Stealing in the Minor division will permit five (5) base advances (without the ball being batted) per inning. Any base may be advanced within the limit of the five (5). Any runner advancing after the allowed five (5) will be returned to their base with no penalty. Any bases that are awarded through book rule do not count toward the limit of Five (5).
- C. Base runners may not leave the base until the pitcher releases the ball.
- D. Dropped third strike applies to all Divisions except the Minor division.
- E. Interference (See NSA Rule Book)
- F. Obstruction (See NSA Rule Book)
- G. An offensive player must not collide with any defensive player who has the ball in her possession and is waiting to make a tag. Any offensive player who, in the judgement of the umpire, does collide as stated will be automatically be called out. Any offensive player that maliciously and intentionally runs into a defensive player awaiting to make a tag will be ejected from the game and will be subject to suspension.
- H. An optional courtesy runner will be allowed and encouraged at any time during the inning when the pitcher and/or catcher is safely on base. The **courtesy runner** may be any player **on the bench not legally in the line-up**. However, if there are no substitutes on the bench, legal or illegal, the courtesy runner will be the player who was recorded with the last out of the inning. There is no charged substitution for instituting the courtesy runner.
- I. Strike Zone (See NSA Rule Book)
- J. There is free substitution; however, all re-entries must be inserted into their original slot in the batting order. A starter or substitute may only re-enter once
- K. A designated hitter or DH is permitted in Senior I, Senior II, Junior Olympic, Junior National and Junior American divisions.
- L. A team is permitted only three defensive conferences per seven innings, one for each extra inning. Changing pitchers is not a charged conference. Any defensive conferences after three, the pitcher must be changed (This is a High School Rule).
- M. A team is permitted only one offensive conference per inning.
- N. The alternating ball rule will be used.
- O. Fake tags (in order to deceive the runner) are not permitted and are considered unsportsmanlike. Player is subject to ejection and obstructed runner is bound by obstruction rule.
- P. Intentionally thrown bat (or other equipment) will be subject to ejection by umpire.
- Q. Thrown bat rule will be used. First offense, team warning; thereafter, batters will be called out by umpire.
- R. Bunting is permitted in ALL divisions.

## **VI. RUNS AND SCORES**

- A. There is a limit of ten runs per inning per team for Senior I, Senior II, Junior Olympic, and Junior National divisions.  
There is a limit of five runs per inning per team for Junior American, Junior Patriot, Major and Minor divisions.**
- B. A team that is ahead by ten or more runs after the fifth inning (4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead) will be the winner.**
- C. In all divisions, the last declared inning has unlimited runs. If due to a time limit or approaching darkness the umpire declares an inning the final inning, there will be no more innings played at the completion of that inning, even if there is more time or it is still light enough to play. If the umpire does not declare a final inning before the start of the inning, it cannot be made the final inning and if there is not enough time to complete another inning, the game will be legal with no inning set as the final inning.**

## **VII. PITCHING REGULATIONS**

- A. Windmill pitching is permitted in all divisions**
- B. Pitcher must have the pivot foot in contact with the pitching plate at the start of the pitch, non-pivot foot must be on or near, but not on the side of the pitching plate. Pivot foot cannot leave contact with the ground (high School Rule). Also, note: All divisions pitch from forty (43) feet except the Jr. Patriot and Majors from forty (40) feet and Minor division, which will be thirty-five (35) feet.**
- C. Pitcher may return to the mound one time after being removed (this is one time per inning). There are no warm-up pitches for the re-entry in an inning (High School Rule).**
- D. There is no restriction to the number of innings or games pitched per player.**
- E. Pitchers cannot hit more than three batters per inning or five batters over the entire game (must be replaced on fourth batter/inning or sixth batter/game).**
- F. There will be no pitching, fielding or hitting activity in the live ball area of the field during the pre-game meeting between the umpire and the team captains and managers.**

## **VIII. GAME RESCHEDULING**

- A. Rescheduling of games (after final schedule) is in accordance with S.J.G.S.A. By Laws Article IX Section 1 Section 1 part c-1 and will be subject to fines by the Association and will be only allowed for the following reasons:
  - 1. Team with less than eight (8) available rostered players due to
    - a. Illness**
    - b. Designated school has a prom, trip or other school approved function**
    - c. Religious reasons****
  - 2. All game changes must be approved by the Division Commissioner at least forty-eight hours prior to the game.****
- B. Umpires will be scheduled (for make up games) by the Chief Commissioner only. Managers and/or coaches can only cancel umpires for rainouts. At no other time will any manager or coach contact the Umpire Association.**