

THE SOUTH SUBURBAN RECREATIONAL SOFTBALL LEAGUE

Partnership between the communities/organizations of: Brecksville, Broadview Heights, Brooklyn Heights, Cuyahoga Heights, Independence, Newburgh Heights, Seven Hills, and Valley View

Player Eligibility Guidelines – Age as of August 1 (current playing year)

- Minitail – 9yr old through 11yr old
- Pigtail – 12yr old through 14yr old

UMPIRES

Have full jurisdiction over the conduct of the players, managers, and the spectators regarding the ball game. He or she shall have the authority to cancel the game eject a player, coach or spectator and forfeit a game for any just cause. **Any player, spectator, or coach who is ejected from the game will automatically be suspended for the teams next 2 games.** Umpires shall conduct each game by regular baseball rules and any modifications of same or as set forth in the rulings. **Outbursts at umpires will not be tolerated.**

PROTESTS

No protests will be considered. Umpire decisions are final.

GOVERNMENT

- The Baseball/Softball program organized by the Recreation Departments of the partnering communities shall be under the direct supervision and control of the Recreation Directors/Athletic Directors. The enforcement of all rules and regulations shall be the duty of the Directors. The decision of the Directors shall be final in all cases.
- All managers, coaches, players, umpires, scorers and other personnel involved in this program are expected to subscribe to the spirit of all rules and regulations concerned herein. All league participants are prohibited from using any tobacco product while on the field or on the bench. No alcohol is permitted at the field before, during, or after games – this includes spectators. Violation of this policy will result in ejection from the game and suspension from the league.
- In-game electronic communication between players and coaches is prohibited.
- For purposes of this policy, an unmanned aerial vehicle ("UAV"), commonly known as a drone, is any aircraft without a human pilot aboard the device. The use of drones is prohibited for any purpose by any persons at any field as soon as any player, coach, or official is present at the field, and until the last player, coach, or official has left the field following the completion of the game. Any umpire or community representative can remove anyone attempting to use a drone from the facility, and the contest may be forfeited if the user does not comply. Refusal to comply with this rule may result in the offender being ejected from attending any game at any site for the duration of the season.
- Playing rules will default to the current years NFHS/OHSAA rules, as modified for the use in this league per this document. Playing fields will be laid out in accordance with league dimensions as outlined per divisions.

SPORTSMANSHIP

- The Recreation Departments promote good sportsmanship between all players, parents and spectators. Our emphasis in this league is on having fun, learning skills and participation.
- It is the manager's responsibility to maintain the discipline of his team. No players or spectators are allowed directly behind the backstop in line with the catcher and umpire. There will be no heckling, badgering, or name calling of opposing players or organized noise or chanting prior to or during the pitcher's delivery (i.e. banging bats, "swing batter," "rally, rally," etc.).
- All league participants are prohibited from using any tobacco product while on the field or on the bench. No alcohol is permitted at the field before, during, or after games – this includes spectators. Violation of this policy can result in ejection from the game and suspension from the league.
- Littering is prohibited! Please leave the dugouts and playing field in as good of condition, or better than you found it. There are trash and recycling containers located at all fields.
- All coaches, players and parents are expected demonstrate good sportsmanship and model proper behavior at all times. A violation will result in the following:
 1. Immediate ejection from that game and dismissal from the facilities for the remainder of the day.
 2. Any ejection will result in an additional two game suspension from the facilities.
 3. Any manager or coach ejected from two or more games during the season may not be permitted to manage or coach the following season pending review by the City Athletic Director.
 4. Any physical contact done in anger or in an attempt to intimidate will result in immediate expulsion from participating in the program indefinitely.

5. If any offender is asked to leave the grounds and fails to do so, the game will be suspended until the offender leaves the premises. Failure to do so may result in a forfeit.

GAME RULES (unless modified per league)

- If either team is 10 runs ahead, at the end of 4 (3 ½ for home team) or more complete innings, the game shall automatically be terminated.
- No new inning will be permitted to start after ninety (90) minutes have elapsed from the scheduled game time. If a game is tied after six (6) innings, one (1) extra inning can be played if the time limit has not been reached. If the game remains tied after the extra inning the game will end in a tie (all aspects of this rule are enforced without exception in all games.)
- Both teams should maintain a scorebook and verify scores between innings. In the case of a dispute, the home team's book is official.
- Home teams must report the final score to their city representative/director for standings.
- The Slide or Give-Up rule is in effect. Base runners must "slide or give up" at all bases (except 1st) and home plate on all close plays. A legal slide MUST be feet-first with no malicious contact. If any malicious contact occurs, the runner shall be called out and immediately ejected for the remainder of the game. A malicious contact determination is made at the umpire's discretion. A runner is permitted to slide head-first only when returning to a base i.e. pickoff attempt, trying to avoid being doubled off on a fly out, etc.). Any violations are made at the umpire's discretion and will result in the runner being called out.
- Once the ball is securely in control by an infielder, any base runner that is between bases must commit to trying to advance to the next base or must commit to returning to the previous base – a runner(s) CANNOT stop or pause at this point or he can be ruled out. The defense can attempt to make a play on any runner(s) in this scenario.

POSITIONING OF PLAYERS, BATTING ORDER ETC.

- Teams shall use 4 outfielders to create a 10 player defensive team **Minitail may use 5 outfielders**
- All players on the roster who are present at the start of a game MUST play at least three (3) innings per game defensively, including at least one (1) of the first four (4) innings at an infield position.
 - No player can sit two (2) consecutive innings.
 - If a parent/guardian has determined that their child cannot play the infield due to safety concerns, any such player(s) shall be identified during the pregame manager's meeting, and should be marked accordingly in each team's scorebook
- The offensive line-up shall contain all players present at the game. They shall bat in sequence for all innings of the game.
- A game shall be declared a forfeit if a team fails to field 7 players within 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time.
- If a player leaves the game early for any reason (other than an ejection), the player's spot in the batting order shall be skipped for the remainder of the game with no out being recorded. If a player is ejected from the game, an out will be recorded each time his position in the batting order is reached. Any players arriving after the start of the game will be inserted at the end of the lineup.

Rainout or Suspended games

- If a game is called because of rain, the following applies:
 1. If 4 innings have been completed, it is considered a complete game.
 2. If the home team has scored more runs in 3 1/2 innings than the visiting team has scored in 4 innings, it is considered a complete game.
 3. If at least half of the game time has been played (45 minutes), the game will be considered complete and WILL NOT be made up. The score will revert back to the last completed inning, unless the home team is at bat, and has taken the lead prior to the stoppage of play. In such case that will be the final score.
 4. If none of the above has been satisfied, the game will be considered a rain-out and replayed from the start without innings being charged to the pitchers.
- All games shall be temporarily suspended if lightning or threatening weather is present.
- If the last inning (whether it be the 4th, 5th, 6th, or extra innings) is unduly long so that darkness or field conditions would endanger the safety of the players, the game shall be called and the score shall revert back to the last completed inning. This is an umpire's decision. The only exception to this rule occurs when the visiting team has taken the lead in the top of the inning during which the game was suspended, and the home team did not complete its last at bat. In this instance, the game will be suspended and resumed at a future date if the schedule permits. All suspended games shall be completed from point of suspension. Managers should check

with each other once a game has been suspended as to the number of outs, the position of runners, etc. In a suspended game, pitchers previously used in the game cannot return to the mound.

- Any games that are cancelled due to weather must have a new date, time, and field agreed upon within 7 days of the cancelled game (the game does not need to be **played** within 7 days – the rescheduling process just needs to be completed). Teams must complete the rescheduling process for its earliest cancelled game before completing rescheduling of a subsequent game. For example, a game cancelled on June 2 must be rescheduled before a team can finalize plans to reschedule a game that was cancelled on June 8. Any game not rescheduled after 7 days will be assigned a date, time, and field by the home team's director or scheduler. If a team cannot make the date/time assigned by the home team's director or scheduler, the game may be declared a forfeit.

Call-up/Call-overs

- In the event that a team will not be able to field **at least 9 players** for a game, notify the Recreation Director who will help arrange for the "call up" from the next level down player. If a player from that division is not willing/available to play as a "call up", teams can "call over" a player from another same division team in their home community. Call ups or call overs cannot pitch, must play at least 3 innings defensively, must bat last in the lineup, can only play the outfield defensively, and should wear the jersey of their original team. Call ups/call overs also cannot play more innings than a regular team member. The director or baseball/softball commissioner for the team's community **MUST** be notified and approve of the call up/call over, or the player will be considered ineligible. Directors or commissioners will track the use of players in these situations to make sure the same player is not being used as a call up on a repeated basis. Travel players who are not already on a roster in this league may NOT be used as call ups. If a community only has one team in this age group and a "call over" is needed, the community directors whose teams are playing in any impacted game(s) will collaborate on determining a reasonable call over alternative.

Minitail Specific Rules (9-11yr old)

FIELD DIMENSIONS – 60' bases, 35' mound/pitching plate

EQUIPMENT

- Players can use a bat that is NFHS approved (<https://www.nfhs.org/sports-resource-content/bat-certification-marks-and-usa-softball-non-approved-bats-with-certification-marks/>) and not on the USA Softball Non-Approved list (<https://usa.asasoftball.com/e/BB1P2000.asp>).
- Metal spike shoes are **not** permitted. Rubber coated cleats are permitted.
- An 11" softball will be used for play.
- All offensive players (team at bat) must wear an approved batting helmet if outside of the dugout.
- **It is HIGHLY recommended that the Pitcher wear protective fielder mask.**

PITCHING

- All at bats begin with a 1-1 count.
- A pitcher who hits three (3) batters during a game must be removed from pitching for the remainder of the game.
- No pitcher can pitch more than 12 outs in 1 game.
- A wind-up/windmill motion may be used, provided it is legal according to NFHS rules. However, most pitchers will use the underhand motion, which is also permitted.
- Any Pitcher Permitted To Re-Enter As Pitcher: Unlimited (Substituting a pitcher numerous times to reflect the opposing line-up is not permitted.)
- Illegal pitches are not enforced
- New pitchers entering the game will be permitted six (6) warm up pitches; all pitchers remaining in the game from the previous inning will be permitted four (4) warm up pitches

MINITAIL GAME MODIFICATIONS

- Teams will play 6 infielders (P, C, 1B, 2B, 3B, SS), and a maximum of 5 outfielders who are to be positioned no shallower than the edge of the outfield grass. The outfielders are NOT permitted to directly make a play on a base or runner (out recorded as a solo out by the outfielder on a baserunner). The ball must be possessed by an infielder to make a play on the base runner.
- Maximum of 6 innings (with maximum of 1 extra inning, if the game is tied and time permits).
- A maximum of 5 runs can be scored per inning until the last inning. The umpire will declare the final inning after conferring with the managers, and the declared final inning ONLY will be played as an unlimited runs inning. If there is not agreement between the managers and umpire on declaring the final inning, then the umpire's decision is final.
- No infield fly rule is in effect.
- **No bunting.**
- Dropped third strike, the batter is out; she cannot try to advance to first.
- No stealing or leadoffs, runners must wait until the batter makes contact before leaving the base.
- Two adult coaches may be used in the first and third base coach's boxes. If a coach physically helps his or her player in any way or interferes with the opposing team's players the umpire will either call the runner out or award the next base to the interfered team.
- No stealing of any base is permitted.
- No leading off of bases. Umpire will give one warning to the team per game, and then on the next offense, the umpire will call the runner out. You may be off the base once the ball crosses the plate.
- An intentional pass is not permitted.
- A batter who is walked cannot advance to 2nd base on the walk
- There will be a liberal strike zone.
- If a batter throws their helmet or bat, the team will be warned once. If the situation occurs again the player throwing the helmet or bat will be ejected from the game.
- A coach is allowed one (1) visit to the mound. A second visit will result in removal of pitcher. Any defensive conferences called by a coach during the game will count as a mound visit.

Pigtail Specific Rules (12-14yr old)

FIELD DIMENSIONS – 60' bases, 40' mound/pitching plate

EQUIPMENT

- Players can use a bat that is NFHS approved (<https://www.nfhs.org/sports-resource-content/bat-certification-marks-and-usa-softball-non-approved-bats-with-certification-marks/>) and not on the USA Softball Non-Approved list (<https://usa.asasoftball.com/e/BB1P2000.asp>).
- Metal spike shoes are **not** permitted. Rubber coated cleats are permitted.
- An 12" softball will be used for play.
- All offensive players (team at bat) must wear an approved batting helmet if outside of the dugout.
- **It is HIGHLY recommended that the Pitcher wear protective fielder mask.**

PITCHING

- A pitcher who hits three (3) batters during a game must be removed from pitching for the remainder of the game.
- No pitcher can pitch more than 12 outs in 1 game.
- A wind-up/windmill motion may be used, provided it is legal according to NFHS rules. However, most pitchers will use the underhand motion, which is also permitted.
- Any Pitcher Permitted To Re-Enter As Pitcher: Unlimited (Substituting a pitcher numerous times to reflect the opposing line-up is not permitted.)
- Illegal pitches are enforced
- New pitchers entering the game will be permitted six (6) warm up pitches; all pitchers remaining in the game from the previous inning will be permitted four (4) warm up pitches

PIGTAIL GAME MODIFICATIONS

- Maximum of 7 innings (with maximum of 1 extra inning, if the game is tied and time permits).
- A maximum of 5 runs can be scored per inning until the last inning. The umpire will declare the final inning after conferring with the managers, and the declared final inning **ONLY** will be played as an unlimited runs inning. If there is not agreement between the managers and umpire on declaring the final inning, then the umpire's decision is final.
- There will be a liberal strike zone
- The catcher does not have to hold a third strike.
- The infield fly rule IS in effect.
- Bunting is permitted.
- **An intentional pass is not permitted.**
- Stealing is permitted in this league. Runners cannot leave the base until the pitch crosses home plate. Runners may only advance one base per pitch. However, if a play is made on any runner, all runners may advance one more base (unless a second play is made on any runner, where all runners may advance another base). Runners cannot advance to home plate unless a play is made on any runner.
- If a player throws a bat, helmet, etc., he will receive a warning. The next time a player throws a bat or helmet, he is out. IT IS A TEAM WARNING!
- A runner is permitted to slide head-first **ONLY** when returning to a base (i.e. pickoff attempt, trying to avoid being doubled off on a fly out, etc.). Any violations are made at the umpire's discretion and will result in the runner being called out.
- If a coach physically helps his or her player in any way or interferes with the opposing team's players the umpire will either call the runner out or award the next base to the interfered team.