

NATIONAL LEAGUE RULES –3.0. 02/21/2024

A. GENERAL

The National League Committee (NLC) shall consist of a maximum of seven (7) members including its appointed Chairman. A minimum three (3) Sun City National League players will serve as Committee Members and represent equally managers and players.

Current Committee:

Tom Dellopoulos – Chair

Mary Toland

Tom Garrett

(Refer to "National League Committee Guidelines" for further detail).

B. ORGANIZATIONS

The League will be composed of players from the Sun City Softball Club. The combined membership is referred to as the Sun City Softball Club. The number of teams will be determined by the National League Committee. Selection of players to teams will follow National League Committee Guidelines for all sessions.

All National League team Managers must be approved by the National League Committee. Team Managers are required to have or have access to basic computer skills, i.e. the ability to Send, Receive and Respond to emails Or Send and Receive cell phone text messages. The ability and equipment to print out Scoresheets.

C. UNIFORMS

The applicable club furnishes pants, shorts, belts and hats. Articles of uniforms are for league play only and not to be used for non-league/club activities. Team shirts are issued to players for use only during the session and are returned at the conclusion of the session. Alterations are not permitted except for temporary "tucks" for fit. All articles of uniform are the property of the club and will be returned by any player who resigns his membership. In support of our sponsors, shirts should be worn so the sponsor's name is clearly visible, shirt tails tucked in.

All players, coaches, and managers MUST wear their team shirt. In case of cold or inclement weather, protective clothing will be allowed over uniforms.

Uniforms are provided to identify individuals as teammates. Expressions of individuality are not encouraged and may be prohibited if deemed inappropriate by the NLC.

D. GAME RULES

1. GENERAL

- a. No clock will be used. Maximum of seven (7) innings per game. Minimum of 5 innings.
- b. Teams are limited to four (4) runs per inning except for the 7th inning (or last inning as determined by the Clock if used) and signaled by the Scorer or

Umpires, during which each team may score an unlimited number of runs.

2. MERCY RULES

a. Four (4) Run Rule (referred to as the "*flip*")

If the visiting team is ahead by five (5) runs or more after the last inning has been declared, the home team will clear the bases and continue to bat in the top of the last inning. If home team does not tie or go ahead, the game is over. If in the event the home team ties or goes ahead the visiting team will get their last at bat.

b. Ten (10) Run Rule

If either team is ahead by ten (10) or more runs at the end of six (6) innings, GAME OVER.

c. Twelve (12) Run Rule

If either team is ahead by twelve (12) or more runs at the end of five (5) innings, GAME OVER.

3. Tie Games

If score is tied after the final complete inning, each team will be credited with a $\frac{1}{2}$ win.

4. Canceled / Delayed Games

Games shall only be canceled by a Field Manager, N.L. Committee Member, or Softball Board Club Member, and in that order. When any game is canceled due to inclement weather or poor field conditions, all succeeding games at the field will be canceled. When part of the day's schedule is completed and the weather closes the field, completed games will NOT count for the record.

E. PLAYING RULES

1. Team Organizations

a. Each assigned team will consist of a minimum of eleven (11) and a maximum of 12 players. When more than eleven (11) players are assigned, all will bat and each player will play at least three (3) innings on defense, unless an individual player chooses to play less. If a team has 11 or more roster players, substitutes are not allowed, unless the team needs a pitcher.

b. A tardy player who arrives before the team has batted through the batting order may play; player will bat at the bottom of the order and play any position. A tardy player who arrives after team has batted through the batting order **will not play**.

c. A **non-injured** player who leaves a game early will be declared an "out" each time they would have come to bat. During a game, NO substitutions are allowed for a non-injured player.

- Teams can play with any number of roster players and subs as long as the total is at least nine (9). If a team has a maximum of twelve (12) in the line-up and a player leaves the game due to an injury, the player's position in the lineup for future at bats will be bypassed with NO PENALTY and team will continue play with (11) players.

- (i) **Exception:** If the injured player is the team's pitcher, and no other team player will pitch, the manager can choose to get a pitcher to substitute. Rules E.2.a., E.2.b. and E.2.c. apply.

2. Substitute Players

a. Substitute players are **REQUIRED** to be obtained from the following sources, ***in the following order:***

First: The published ***player placement pool or sub pool player*** listed on the roster.

Second: Any Bye Team/s

Third: Any Team that has already played for the day. In the case of the first schedule game of the day, pick from any team.

Fourth: In an emergency, where no qualified substitute player is available from any of the preceding sources, qualified substitutes player may be obtained from teams that play later that day.

- NO substitute player is permitted for a missing twelfth (12th) roster player. In those situations, teams will play with their remaining eleven (11) roster players.
 - (i) **Pitcher Exception:** If the missing twelfth (12th) player is the team's designated pitcher **and** the team has ***no other player with prior SCSSL pitching experience*** available among its remaining eleven (11) roster players, then a substitute pitcher may be obtained as permitted under Rule E.2.a. (above) and Rule E.2.c. (below).

b. Players rated as a seven (7) may only substitute for like-rated players. Players rated as an eight (8) may substitute for eights or sevens (7) . Nine (9) rated players may substitute for anyone. Pitchers of any rating may pitch.

- **Pitchers:** Substitute pitchers may be obtained from Placement Pool, Substitute Pool or any National League team, in accordance with Rules E.2.a., E.2.b., and E.2.c. **Exception, At the discretion of the Committee and managers, pitchers may come from the Central or American leagues.**
- **Injury Exception:** An injured player may be replaced if team strength drops below eleven (11) players. Manager will select a replacement player from the stands (*from prior game if possible*). The selected replacement player must have same player rating, or lower, as the injured player. The replacement player will take the injured player's position in the team batting order.
- **"No Show" Exception:** If a team has a player unexpectedly fail to show up for the first game of the day, and a player from the second game is not available, manager may my select any available player with the same or lower rating as the missing player.
- **Penalty for an Illegal substitution:** If a player is identified as an illegal substitute per the substitution rules, that player will be removed from the game. The offending team will continue to play. The position will be filled with the correct rated player the lineup .
- Managers may call in advance to obtain substitute players ***in the manner set forth in Rule E.2.a. (above)***.

- C. **Maximum Substitutions by a Player:** An assigned player may substitute only two (2) times each week and only one (1) time for the same team. They may play a maximum of 4 times a week. If an assigned player's team has a bye, the player may sub three (3) times that week.
- Exception:** If the player is listed on the Sub Pool list or Placement Pool list, they may substitute four (4) times each week but still only one (1) time for the same team.
- Substitute players may be placed anywhere in the lineup, unless substitute is replacing an injured player. In that situation Rule E.2.c.(ii) applies (*injury exception*).
 - If two equally rated players desire/agree to share a position, they may ask the National League Committee to treat them as one for roster and substitution purposes. Players so designated will alternate by inning on defense and at bats on offense.

3. Courtesy Runners

National League Players have a right to run for themselves. CR's will be allowed to run if asked for by the player as needed.

courtesy runners may 'run once per inning'. The scorer will track this on the official scoresheet.

- A. Players **must** be able to run from home plate to first base.
- B. Players who have a medical condition limiting their ability to run, may request their team manager provide a courtesy runner after they reach first base safely.
- C. A courtesy runner, whose turn at bat comes while on base, will be removed from the bases and take their turn at bat. The player who was replaced by the courtesy runner on base will be out. The out occurs on the Bases. A second courtesy runner cannot be substituted.
- D. A courtesy runner may not run for another courtesy runner.
- E. **Pitchers:** A pitcher may request a courtesy runner at any time during a game.
- The Pitcher running as a Pitcher Must be replaced on base after 2 Outs.
 - If a pitcher has pitched his final inning the pitcher may remain a base runner after 2 outs.
 - If a pitcher runs as a Courtesy Runner the pitcher may NOT be replaced.
 - A courtesy runner for the pitcher does not have to be declared or registered on the official scoresheet prepared by the Manager prior to the game.

4. Balls /Strikes

A legal pitch with an arc between six (6) feet to twelve (12) feet, that touches any part of the plate or mat extension, is a strike.

5. Base Running

- a. No infield fly rule.

- b. Double first base: When a play is being made on the batter/runner, the runner must touch the orange part of the bag. If he touches the white he may be called out by the umpire. If a defensive player at 1st is pulled into foul territory as a result of a bad throw, the defensive player can also touch orange base and record an out prior to the batter/runner reaching the base. The batter/runner can use either the white or orange base in this situation to avoid a collision.
- c. Sliding and Diving: From a running or standing position toward the base or home plate from any direction is prohibited. A runner, who falls down short of a base or just beyond it, may crawl back to the base without a penalty.
- d. Contact: Runners must avoid unnecessary contact with a defensive player who is fielding the ball and must veer out of the base path to avoid contact. A defensive player may not block a runner when he is not fielding the ball. If a runner veers off to avoid contact & defensive layer drops the ball, runner shall be ruled safe.
- e. Commitment Line: If the runner has passed the commitment line (twenty 20 ft. from home base) and continues to run on the foul line instead of the angle line, or inside of the angle line, and interferes with the catcher taking a throw at the original home plate, a dead ball shall be declared and the runner is out. The scoring line is placed eight (8) ft. from the home plate and base runners should be using the guiding line from the foul line to the scoring line to avoid contact with defensive player.
 - * **Defensive players can only touch the original home plate and runners can only touch the scoring line.**
- f. Runners must cross the scoring line with their foot down on the ground and beyond or on the line located adjacent to the right-handed batters box in order to be safe at home.
- g. Runners tagged by the defensive team after crossing commitment line will be safe.
- h. If the runner touches/crosses home plate, or the batter's box, including the lines, the runner will be out and the ball remains live.
- i. Defensive players cannot decoy the base runners into thinking a play is being made on him or her to impede progress. All fake tags are prohibited which may cause confusion to the runner. Runner will be ruled safe and the defensive player will be given a warning, if the defensive player continues to do the said offense , the player will be ejected from the game. Team will be required to play, 1 player short and will have to take an out.

6. Pitchers Box (Optional)

A line will be drawn six (6) feet back from the pitching rubber and the same width of the pitching rubber. That line along with the pitching rubber will form a pitchers box. The pitcher must present and release the ball while standing within the imaginary box.

7. Mandated Pitchers Mask

All pitchers will wear a protective face mask while pitching.

It is recommended that the pitcher wear any protective safety equipment they choose in addition to the face mask.

8. Protests / Appeals

Only a MANAGER may appeal a call. Judgment calls such as balls or strikes, runner out or safe and foul or fair balls are not grounds for appeal.

Interpretation of the rules will be the only grounds for a protest and will be settled on the field between the umpires and two managers. Managers must appeal other violations such as an ineligible sub or runner, runner missing a bag, interference and batter batting out of order to the home umpire. Any situation where a rule is not covered in our National League Rules, two managers and umpires must agree to a solution.

9. Ejections

An umpire may eject a player who threatens or uses abusive language directly or indirectly toward an umpire, player, or spectator. Umpire ejecting a player must submit a written report to the National League Committee

Chairman within twenty-four (24) hours. An ejected player must leave the field in a timely manner. An ejected player is automatically suspended from playing in any games, from the time of their ejection, until **a decision comes down from the NL Committee**. If a player attacks an umpire, player, or spectator, The National League Committee will suspend the player from further play pending a decision on disciplinary action. President of the Sun City Softball Club will to be sent copies of action taken. All discipline should be handled by the National League Committee.

a. Grievance - should a player not agree with the decision of their respective committee, they have the right to appeal to their Club Board President.

10. Warm-Up Pitches

For the first two innings five (5) warm-up pitches will be allowed. For the remaining innings, two (2) warm-up pitches will be allowed. Five (5) warm-up pitches will be allowed when a pitcher relieves another. Infield warm-up will be discontinued after the second inning.

11. Equipment

Only USA or USSA bats, rated 1.20 or less, may be used in National League play. Bats rated at 1.20 or less which were previously ASA approved may be used provided they are not on a banned bats list. No banned bats will be allowed during National League play. Senior tournament bats are not allowed.

12. Batting out of order:

The scorekeeper shall notify the home plate umpire immediately if a batter is hitting out of order and only the correct batter will bat. He will assume the balls and strike count that the incorrect batter has achieved. No Penalty.

F. PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Absentees

Managing a team is a difficult job requiring the full cooperation of all the team members. If you are going to be late or miss a game, notify your manager well ahead of time. Arrive at the field at least thirty (30) minutes before your game to loosen up properly and thus avoid unnecessary muscle injuries. **A player who misses four**

(4) successive games will be assigned to the placement/sub pool.

2. Umpires and Scorekeepers

The Chief Umpire or the Umpire Committee will assign umpires. Team Managers will assign scorekeepers. It will be the responsibility of the players assigned to arrange for their own replacement if they are unavailable. ***Umpiring and scorekeeping responsibilities take precedence over any request to substitute as a player on another team.*** Alcoholic beverages are not to be consumed while working games.

a. Umpires should consult with each other on protest or appeal calls.

3. field Maintenance

The home team is responsible for preparing the field before the first game and securing the field after the last game.

(BEFORE LEAVING FIELD MAKE SURE ALL BUILDINGS ARE LOCKED) Before the start of the second game and every game thereafter the home team is responsible for grooming the base paths between games at Sun City.

4. Resignations

If a player quits a team, then that player becomes ineligible to play in the league for the remainder of the session.

player cannot switch leagues until the end of each session.) Players are responsible for notifying the league if they are going to be inactive for a period or resigning their membership from the league. In case of injuries, notify league of your return date.

5. Player Registration

Players are responsible for Registering Online with a link provided at: <http://suncitysb.org> or received in an email their intention and availability to play in next scheduled session.

6. Banned / Altered Bats

A bat is: considered altered when the physical characteristics of a legal bat have been changed. Anything done to a bat to enhance the performance of a bat is illegal. Inserting material inside the bat, shaving the bat, applying excessive tape (more than 2 layers) to the bat grip, or painting the bat other than at the top or bottom for identification purposes are examples of altering a bat. Exceptions: knob grips/cones, colored tape for identification purposes, address labels, or friction tape are not considered altering a bat.

- a. Any umpire, club board member, or any member of the League Committees have the right to inspect any bat that they have "reason to believe" has been altered. If there is "probable cause" the person must surrender their bat for inspection. If the bat is suspect, then the bat may be digitally X-rayed for any alterations.
- b. Any player refusing to surrender their bat for inspection will be suspended from play immediately. The player will remain suspended from all play until such time that an inspection of the bat in question has been made. If the bat has been determined to be altered the player must appear before the Board of the club, they belong to for disciplinary action.
- c. Any player found to have used an illegal or altered bat is subject to suspension from our league for up to one (1) year. Flagrant or more than one offense is subject to further punishment. The infraction would also be

- subject to being reported to all local, state, and national organizations. The player would then be subject to any ban these organizations impose.
- d. If any player is found to be using an illegal or altered bat during a game, the following rule applies: If the bat is found prior to batting the bat is removed from the game at that time. If the bat is found after the player bats, batter is out, and all runners return to the base they were at prior to the at bat.

7. Alcohol:

Alcoholic Beverages may not be consumed while Playing, **Scoring, Announcing** or Umpiring a game. **No Alcoholic beverages in the Dug-Out.**

8. Sub & Placement Pools:

The Sub pool is for players who request to be on the sub pool.

The Placement pool is for: new players (green team), players returning after four (4) absences, and players arriving after the first four (4) games of the season. Managers may request players from the Placement pool as follows: The manager needs to contact the National League

Committee person immediately “after” the player has a fifth absence.

A bye or Rain-Outs do not count as a missed game. The NL Chairmen or Committee member, in case of more than one manager needing a replacement player. The sequence for manager selection would be determined by the actual game date and game time the player missed a fifth game. If these two factors were identical, managers would flip a coin to determine the order of Placement Player selection.

The National League Chairman will let the manager know who the new player will be.

9. Safety Protocol:

All players must follow all safety protocol rules as mandated and published by the Sun City Softball club. Violations of those rules may affect a player’s ability to participate in games. Any player hit in the head by a thrown or batted ball shall be removed from the remainder of the game.