

## AMERICAN LEAGUE RULES – 03/21/2025

### **Committee Members**

*Dave Rachau – Chairperson*

*George League – Co-chairperson*

*George Fairbanks – Secretary*

*Pat Moran*

*Rodger Beckes*

### A. Overview

The American League will be governed by SSUSA rules except as modified. (If needed, use the ASA rules for clarification of SSUSA rules only)

### B. Organization

The American League will be composed of players from Sun City Softball Club who have a rating of 1, 2, or 3.

### C. Uniforms

The clubs furnish pants, shorts, belts, jerseys, and caps/women's visors. Articles of uniforms are for league or club play only and are not to be used for non-league/club activities.

Alterations are not permitted except for temporary "tucks" for fit. Any permanent alterations will result in a charge to the player. Caps/women's visors, pants, and shorts will be replaced on an exchange basis only, if worn out or damaged by play. All articles of uniform are the property of the club. Any player who resigns his membership must return jersey's, pants, and shorts.

In support of our sponsors a full league-issued uniform consisting of cap/women's visor/league available safari hat, pants/shorts, and team jersey must be worn so the sponsor's name is clearly visible and shirrtails tucked in. With the exception of the umpires, all players, coaches, and managers must wear their league issued uniforms. In case of cold or inclement weather, additional clothing will be allowed. Dark blue long pants are required and braces may be worn as necessary.

Players will not be allowed to play unless dressed in their properly worn, league issued uniforms. However, players will be given one warning by the umpire to immediately fix the problem or be removed. The team will be charged with an out each time the player would have come to bat. Players must notify the umpire of any medical exceptions. The respective Board will be notified of repeated offenses and be dealt with accordingly. This rule is for the benefit of the sponsors, for proper newspaper/team pictures and for the professionalism of the SCSSL.

## D. Game Rules

### General

Game time is kept using an optional 60 minute clock. The umpires are responsible for insuring the game starts on time and that both teams are notified when the time expires and that the next regular inning will allow unlimited runs. The first game will start no later than its prescribed time from the schedule, unless otherwise indicated. At the designated time, the scorekeeper will start the clock whether teams are ready or not.

Teams are limited to four (4) runs per inning except for last inning in which each team can score unlimited number of runs.

Batters will start with a one and one count with one to waste.

### Flip-Flop rule

Games will be 7 innings, or the time limit, whichever comes first. If the visiting team is ahead by Seven (7) or more runs, the unlimited inning will be reversed where the home team bats first and then the visiting team bats if needed.

### Tie Games

If time is left on the clock at the end of the 6th inning, one extra inning will be played. Each team can only score a maximum of 4 runs in that extra inning. That extra inning will start with one out and a runner on second. That runner will be the last batter of the previous inning.

### Canceled or Delayed Games

Games shall only be canceled by: Field manager, American League Committee member, or a club board member in that order. When any game is canceled due to inclement weather, succeeding games at the field will be canceled. The person canceling the games must contact all the managers of subsequent games at the field to notify them of the cancellation so they can call their players. When part of the day's schedule is completed and the weather closes the field, completed games will count for the record. A game must be 5 complete innings to be considered complete unless the home team is ahead at the end of 4 ½ innings.

### Mercy Rule

If a team is ahead by 10 runs after 6 innings the game will be over. 5 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead.

## E. Playing Rules

### Team Organization

Each team will consist of 10 players.

When an injured player must leave the game and team strength falls below ten, an eligible sub may be selected of equal or lower rating from the stands. That player then bats in the same position in the lineup as the injured player. EXCEPTION: If a player must leave a game due to an emergency, a sub of the same rating may be used to replace that player. If no sub is available close the lineup and there will be no out when that player was to come to bat.

### Substitutes

When the need for a substitute is known before game time, managers may select a player from the same rating or a lower rating.

Managers are encouraged to use the sub list if possible before contacting players from other teams.

Penalty for illegal substitution – After the game has started when the illegal player is detected they are to be removed from the game and the offending team plays the remainder of the game short. No substitutes will be allowed and that position in the batting order will be an out each time they come to bat. Any protest must be made during the game and must only be protested by a participating manager.

Roster player may substitute only twice per week, a pitcher on a roster may substitute twice per week as long as they pitch. A player on any kind of sub list may play three (3) games per week but a pitcher may pitch four (4) games per week, but only twice (2) per day. They can only sub once for the same team each week. First violation will result in that player being unable to sub for two weeks. Further violations will result in that player not being able to sub for the remainder of session.

A player may only substitute for the same team a maximum of eight (8) times in one session. A member of the American League committee will monitor the substitutions.

Substitutes may bat anywhere in the lineup.

When a player fills in on the emergency basis for another player and does not play a complete game, he will not be charged with a time subbing. This applies when substituting for a player that is late, gets injured, or has to leave for personal reasons. Managers may pick a player with the same rating or lower from the ball field that is not playing at that time.

## Preferred Sub List

When an opening exists, players on the preferred sub list with the same rating can be placed on a team. Priority is given in the order that the players were placed on the list. New players who wish to join a session after the draft date are eligible to be placed on the preferred sub list immediately after they have completed their time with the Green Team. Three (3) rated players who wish to join a session after the draft date and have participated in any previous league sessions are not eligible for the preferred sub list until AFTER the first half of the current session's games have been played. However, these players are eligible to be placed in the regular sub pool at any time. Players who are in the draft and do not get picked have the choice of going to the Central League. They do not have the choice of going onto a sub list in the American League.

## Courtesy Runners

You may only run once per inning as a courtesy runner.

Players will be allowed to run for themselves if they want to do so. Managers can't insert a courtesy runner in the line up without the player requesting one.

A courtesy runner whose turn at bat comes while they are on base will be out. They will be removed from the base and come to bat. A second courtesy runner cannot be substituted at this time.

A courtesy runner may not run for an existing courtesy runner except for an incurred injury. If a player has a courtesy runner he can't be a courtesy runner in the same inning.

Courtesy runner can only enter the game before first pitch to a batter.

## Balls & Strikes, (foul tip)

A legal pitch with an arc of 6' to 12' that touches the plate/mat is a strike. Runners may advance at their own risk when a foul is caught.

If the batter hits a foul tip and is caught by the catcher, the batter is out.

## Base Running

### Double base at 1st

When a play is being made on the batter/runner they must touch the orange bag. If they touch ONLY the white bag they will be called out by the umpire. There is no appeal by the defensive team. The defensive player must touch the white bag to record an out. Exception: If the defensive player at 1st is pulled into foul territory as a result of a bad throw, the player can touch the orange bag and record an out prior to the batter/runner reaching the base. The batter/runner can use either the white or orange bag in this situation.

### Sliding or Diving

A base runner may slide into 2nd or 3rd base. A base runner may dive back into 1st, 2nd or 3rd base. A base runner may not slide into 1st base or the commitment line. Any base runner using a hard slide to "take out" a defensive player will be called out and ejected from the game. Any player ejected from a game will also be suspended from the next game.

### Avoid Unnecessary Contact

In the interest of safety, runners coming into second base or third base for a force out, where there is a potential double play possibility, must avoid unnecessary contact with the defensive player who is about to catch and then possibly throw the ball. They must do this at the time they see they are going to be out if the ball is handled cleanly. That runner is required to veer off AT THE LAST SECOND either to the inside or the outside to avoid contact and thus prevent themselves from being called for interference and more importantly not causing an injury. If the defensive player drops the ball and the runner was RELATIVELY CLOSE to the base when they veered off, that runner will be called safe at that base even if the defensive player picks up the ball and tags the runner out.

On the other hand, a defensive player who has not received the ball yet may not block a runner from getting to a base. This is obstruction and the umpire will declare the base runner is safe. If this obstruction occurs between first and second, for instance, that runner will get second base.

### Commitment Line/Scoring Line

If the runner has passed the commitment line and continues to run on the original foul line, and interferes with the fielder taking a throw at, and in contact with the plate, then: A dead ball out shall be declared and the runner is out with no advancement for the other runners.

In the senior slow pitch game, a scoring line is placed eight feet from home plate and base runners should be using a direct line from third base to the scoring line. If interference occurs on a thrown ball, the runner is ruled out and the ball is dead so no other runners can advance. Defensive players can only touch home plate and runners can only touch the scoring line.

Runners must cross the scoring line with their foot down on the ground on or beyond the line. If the runner falls and any part of their body is on the ground, on or past the scoring line, they have crossed the line.

Runners tagged by the defensive team will not be out and the ball remains live. If the runner touches the plate, the runner is out and the ball will be live.

### Step Off Rule

A runner on first or third base may, for their own safety and after notifying the umpire, step off of the bag. The runner must step off of the base in a straight line toward and up to the fence. The runner cannot interfere with any hit or thrown ball, if they do it is considered a dead ball and they are out. The runner must retouch the base before they can advance. Their step off position is considered an extension of the base and therefore they can't be put out on any caught ball.

### Pitcher's box

A pitcher's box consisting of the area from the front of the pitcher's plate, extending back 10 feet and 24" wide will be used. The pitcher must release the ball after coming to a complete stop with one foot or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate or within the pitcher's box. One foot must remain in contact with the plate/box when the pitch is released with an underhand motion. A step simultaneous with the release of the ball may be taken in any direction with the free foot. The pitcher must be facing the batter when delivering the pitch.

If the sun presents a problem to the batter in the early morning, they may request that the pitcher moves to one side or the other of the pitching box to allow them to see the pitch.

### Protests/Appeals

Only a manager may appeal a call. Judgment calls such as balls and strikes, runner out or safe, and fair or foul balls, are not grounds for appeal. Interpretation of the rules will be the only grounds for protest and will be settled on the field between the umpires and the two managers. Managers must appeal other violations such as ineligible sub or runner, runner missing a bag, interference, and batting out of order to the home plate umpire. Any situation where a rule is not covered in our American League rules, the two managers and umpires must agree to a solution.

Participating game managers are given the right to waive a rule for the good of the game for unusual circumstances or emergencies.

## Ejections

An umpire may eject a player who threatens or uses abusive language directly or indirectly toward an umpire, player, or spectator. The umpire ejecting a player must submit a written report to the American League Committee Chairman within 24 hours. An ejected player must leave the field within 1 minute or the game will be forfeited. An ejected player is automatically suspended from all league activities including but not limited to playing in games, umpiring, scoring, announcing, spectating, special events, practice, etc. from the time of their ejection, until the conclusion of their next regularly scheduled game and will be subject to further disciplinary action. If a player attacks an umpire, player, or spectator, the American League Committee suspends the player from all club activities as stated in ejected player pending a decision on disciplinary action. President of Sun City Softball Club will be sent a copy of the action taken.

## Grievance

Should a player disagree with the decision of the American League Committee they have the right to appeal to their respective Club Board President.

## Warm-Up Pitches

After the first inning, there may be 3 warm-up pitches or 1 minute, whichever comes first. Five (5) warm-up pitches will be allowed when a pitcher relieves another pitcher. In the interest of safety, pitchers will be allowed time to put on protective gear before the 1 minute countdown starts. Infield practice is allowed for all innings during the time the pitcher is warming up.

## Batting Out of Order

A batter shall be called out, on appeal, for batting out of order only after they complete their time at bat. If the error is discovered before they complete their time at bat, the correct batter will bat and assume the current count of balls & strikes. The appeal must be made before the first pitch to the next batter is made.

## Home Runs

Any ball hit over the fence will count as a home run. The batter may return directly to the dugout without touching 1st base and all other runners on base may return to the dugout without checking next base. This is known as Hit & Sit

## Bases

Bases will be at 70' as per SSUSA rule book.

## Batter Boxes

Player with a foot completely out of the batter box when he hits the ball will be called out and the ball will be dead and runners return to the base they occupied when batter came to the plate.

If a batter's back foot is ahead of the plate when contacting the ball, then the batter is considered out of the batter's box.

### Infield Fly

If there are runners on first and second, with less than two outs, and the umpire deems a hit is a routine fly ball to an infielder, then the batter will be called out and the runners can remain on the bases even if the infielder drops the ball.

## F. Players Equipment

### Pitcher Face Mask

It is mandatory for all pitchers to wear a face mask. If the pitcher leaves the game, the sub must also wear a face mask. If a pitcher refuses to wear a face mask, the game will be forfeited. Each community will have a spare face mask for emergencies.

### Softball Bats

The official bat, made up of the knob, handle, grip, taper, barrel and end cap shall be free of burs, dents, cracks, sharp edges, rattles and show no signs of excessive wear. The official bat may be marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL by the manufacture and shall be no more than 34 inches long nor exceed 38 ounces in weight. The official bat shall not be more than 2.250 inches in diameter at its largest part, including any tolerance for expansion. The official bat must bear either the ASA 2000 certification Mark, ASA 2004 Certification Mark or ASA 2013 Certification Mark and not be listed on the ASA non approved bat list with 2000 or 2004 Certification Mark.

The Miken MSF Freak 100 with an ASA stamped sticker is grand fathered in as a legal bat by the Sun City Softball club.

### Banned or Altered Bats

A bat is considered altered when the physical characteristics of a legal bat have been changed which includes removing insides and gluing end cap back on is a altered bat. 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 grip/cones, colored tape for identification purposes, address labels, or friction tape are not considered altering a bat.

Any umpire, club board member, or any member of any League Committee 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.

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.

Any player found to have an illegal or altered bat is subject to suspension from our league for up to one (1) year by the SCSSL. 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.

Any player found to be using an illegal or altered bat during a game, the following rule applies: If the bat is found prior to bating the bat is removed from the game at that time. If the bat is found after the player bats, the batter is out and all runners return to the base they were at prior to the at bat.

ONLY BATS WITH AN ASA OR USA STAMP WHICH HAS BEEN APPLIED BY THE BAT MANUFACTURER AND VISIBLY APPERING ARE AUTHOURIZED FOR USE AT SUN CITY SOFTBALL FIELD.

## G. Responsibilities of Players

### Absentees

Managing a team is a difficult job requiring the full cooperation of all team members. If you are going to be late, or miss a game, notify your manager well ahead of time. Players need to be ready to play 30 minutes prior to game time as games can run ahead and start early.

A player who misses five (5) consecutive games will be replaced with a placement pool player of equal rating and they will be placed in the placement pool. A player who misses five consecutive games due in part to grieving the loss of a family member may petition the committee for relief from this rule. Players will have to play a complete game in return to not count as a missed game. This also applies to players not present at the start of the session.

A Player sitting out a calendar year or more for any reason will be required to go through the green team one time to be re-rated. The new rating will determine which league they will be assigned

### Scorekeepers

The team manager will assign a scorekeeper. It will be the responsibility of the player assigned to arrange for their own replacement if they are unavailable. Score keeping responsibilities take precedence over any request to sub as a player on another team. Scorekeepers must know how to mark the score book and use the equipment.

### Field Maintenance

The home team is responsible for preparing the field before the first game and securing the field after the last game. If you are involved arrive early. Make sure all buildings are locked before leaving.

The home team of the second and remaining games is responsible for broom dragging the infield for all games at Sun City.

### Resigning

If a player quits a team, they will be out of the league in all capacities for the rest of the session. They will not be able to play, coach or umpire until the session is completed.

### Alcohol

Alcoholic Beverages may not be consumed while playing or umpiring a game

## AMERICAN LEAGUE COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

### American League Mission Statement

The American League provides the opportunity to play senior softball and, at the same time, maintain a higher level of competition. Participation is open to all qualified residents of Sun City. The American League consists of players of wide varying skill levels and ages. The objective of the American League is to promote safe, organized play consistent with American League rules and to maintain a high degree of sportsmanship, camaraderie and enjoyment.

### American League Committee Mission Statement

The American League Committee will act as the spokes group for the American League. They will supervise and control activities that are only related to the American League. They will provide leadership and direction for the league and maintain an effective line of communication between all persons and groups that are involved in the day to day operations of the American League.

### American League Committee functions and duties

1. Report committee activities to the Sun City Softball club board.
2. Conduct player surveys and collect player availability data.
3. Rate all players prior to the Fall and Spring Drafts.
4. Determine the number of teams for each session and select players as per the player placement process.
5. Publish team rosters and schedules.
6. Assign returning and new players to teams after original team rosters are complete.
7. Establish, publish, and enforce all rules.
8. Select team managers as per the American League manager selection process.
9. Maintain an up to date American League master player roster.
10. Provide information to the press and to Angels in the outfield.
11. Schedule managers meetings to provide managers input.
12. Publish and post league information on bulletin boards and the web site.
13. In general, act as the spokes group for the American League.
  
14. Should the American Committee be unable to resolve an issue, that issue will be passed on to the two club Presidents to reach a resolution to the problem. If either club board has a disagreement with either the American Committee, a meeting should be scheduled for further discussion with the club President and members of the respective committee.

### American League Chairperson Duties

1. Schedule committee meetings and manager's meetings.
2. Appoint committee members
3. Insure compliance with the American League and American League Committee guidelines.
4. Supervise the American League draft process.
5. Generally supervise and offer direction for all league functions.

### **MANAGERS**

#### American League Manager Selection Duties

1. Maintain a list of current and prospective managers. The list of prospective managers will be a first in first assigned procedure. If the next perspective manager is not able to fill an open position, he will be skipped, but will not be removed from the top of the list.
2. Before each session, the list will be reviewed to determine the current manager's intent to return, and perspective manager's intent to remain on the list.
3. Should the league drop a team, a request will be made for a manager to volunteer to sit out for a session. If there are no volunteers or resignations, the last manager added will be asked to sit out a session.
4. A manager who has volunteered or been asked to sit out a session will have the option to be added to the top of the list to manage the next available team.
5. Two managers may have a standing agreement to share a team: One for the fall session and one for the spring session.