

Recreation League Rules & Code of Conduct: Division 4

GOALS

The MGSA stands for healthy competition, fair play, good sportsmanship, respect for players, coaches, and parents, learning and improvement. The MGSA promotes the idea that the emotional and physical wellbeing of the players are more important than winning a game. We want our volunteer coaches to treat each player fairly but also as an individual. We promote player safety as paramount both during practice and games.

CONDUCT

Coaches, Players, their families and guests will support all players, coaches, and umpires. The plate umpire's decision is final and binding. Physical or verbal abuse and/or profanity of any kind will not be tolerated. Verbal abuse includes repeated and consistent questioning of umpire calls. Appropriate action will be taken by the umpire, coach, or a board member up to, and including, forfeiture of the game or expulsion of the offending person(s). If a parent or coach is expelled from a game their child is also expelled.

Coaches are strongly encouraged to take an active role in maintaining order during games. Questions and rule clarifications may be asked of umpires in a civil manner, during a time out or between innings, by uniformed coaches only. Parents will direct their questions and concerns to their coaches for action. Coaches are encouraged to bring to the attention of the Board any issues they may have with game officials promptly for our review and/or action.

Game Schedules & Field assignments

All Recreation League games and field assignments will be determined by the scheduler appointed by the Board of Directors. All games will be played as scheduled unless cancelled due to weather or field conditions by a designated representative of the Board, or the Umpire once the game has started.

1. Home and Away Teams will have determined by the League Scheduler.
2. There will be a 10 minute grace period for teams arriving late to a game.
3. Games will be 7 innings long except for the following:
 - A. In the event of a suspension of play, if at least 5 complete innings have been played, regardless of the length of time played, the game will be considered official and the final score will be the score at the end of the last full inning completed.
 - B. Any game reaching a duration of 2 hours shall be considered a complete game regardless of the number of innings played.
 - C. No new inning will be started after 2 hours of play as determined by the umpire, unless the score is tied. The game can be continued but will be considered official and the final score will be the score at the end of the last full inning completed if darkness prevents completion of the game or inning.
 - D. The start of an inning is immediately after the 3rd out of the home team in previous inning.
 - E. Games not started or lasting less than 2 hours with fewer than 5 innings completed will be void and rescheduled by the League Scheduler.

The only exception to the above are Tournament Games, which cannot end in a tie. If a tie game of 5 or more complete innings or 2 or more hours in duration must be suspended due to rain or darkness, play will resume the following day on the same field at 6:00 PM. Games scheduled on that field will be delayed until the tie game is completed with a winner. Home Teams during Tournament will be determined via coin flip during the umpire & coaches meeting prior to the start of the game. The 2 hour time limit applies to all Tournament Games except for the Championship Games, which are not time limited.

WEATHER

The MGSA will try to play as many games as possible but will suspend or cancel games whenever we feel player safety is compromised. Once a determination has been made that conditions are unsuitable for play, we will post it on our web site, www.medinafastpitch.com. Once play begins the determination of unsafe playing conditions is at the discretion of the umpires. The league will monitor weather conditions at the field using our lightning detector and mobile weather radar to ensure the safety of our players and families.

LIGHTNING– if lightning is spotted in the vicinity play will be suspended immediately and players will proceed to the nearest shelter. Our dugouts are properly grounded for player safety. At least 20 minutes without lightning in the vicinity must pass before play can resume.

If for any reason you disagree with the judgment of a league official, umpire or coach regarding weather conditions, you have the right and responsibility to remove your child from the field of play without penalty to your child or her team.

Field of Play

Pitcher's Mound:

1. Division 4: 40 ft. from back of home plate (nearest catcher) to front of the pitcher's plate.
2. First/Third Bases: 60 ft. from back of home plate to middle of first and third bases.
3. Second Base: 84 ft. 10 in. from back of home plate to the center of second base. Second base will be 60 ft. from the outside corners of first and third bases.

Equipment & UNIFORMS

1. No jewelry or hard plastic headbands. If ears were pierced and earrings cannot be taken out, the player will not be permitted to participate in the game.
2. Division 4: Twelve (12) inch balls will be used.
3. Helmets will have league approved face masks and chin straps are to be on helmets. Players may not remove their helmets until they are off the playing field.
4. Bats shall be marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL if they are over 30 inches long.
5. Throwing the bat is not allowed. 1st time– warning. 2nd time– player is out. 3rd time– ejected.
6. Catcher must wear complete set of catcher's equipment while on the field of play. This includes shin guards, chest protector, and helmet with throat guard.
7. Mitts may be used at any position on the field.

RULES OF PLAY

Play by A.S.A. rules. The only exceptions are the following league stated changes.

1. Play will stop upon injury, but only when the umpire calls time out.
 2. Look Back Rule
 - A. Failure to immediately proceed to the next base or return to her base once the pitcher has the ball within the eight (8) foot radius of the pitcher's plate shall result in the base runner being declared out.
 - B. Once the runner returns to a base for any reason, she shall be declared out if she leaves said base, unless a play is made on her or another runner, (a fake throw is considered a play), the pitcher no longer has possession of the ball in the eight (8) foot radius, or the pitcher releases the ball by a pitch to the batter.
 - C. A base on balls is treated the same as a batted ball. The batter/runner may continue past 1st base and is entitled to run toward 2nd base as long as she does not stop at 1st base. If she stops as she rounds 1st, she must then comply with part (A) above.
- Division 3 and 4: Batters may run on a dropped 3rd strike –
- A. With less than 2 outs and 1st base unoccupied.
 - B. With 2 outs even if 1st base is occupied.
 - C. A ball hitting the ground (before it reaches the catcher) is not considered a catch and the batter may advance.
 - D. On a dropped third strike, the batter should run to the white 1st base and the fielder should move to the orange 1st base to receive the ball from the catcher to reduce the possibility of collisions.
- Division 4: Stealing bases (including home) is permitted
- A. Base runners may not leave their base until the ball is released by the pitcher.
 - B. Base runners who leave their bases before the pitcher releases the ball will be declared out.

6. Scoring

7. Team scorekeepers are to verify the score after each inning. The home scorebook will be considered official if scores are not verified and there is a discrepancy.
8. Twelve (12) run mercy rule will apply after 5 innings have been completed. (4 1/2 innings if home team is ahead by 12 runs).

BATTING ORDER AND FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

All players in attendance will bat in a continuous rotation until three (3) outs have been made. Players arriving after the start of the game will be added to the bottom of the batting order. Players leaving the game for any reason will be skipped in the batting order without penalty.

- C. Division 3 and 4: A team may score a maximum of 5 runs in their half inning. The inning is over as soon as the fifth run is scored or 3 outs have been obtained.
- D. Division 2, 3 and 4: Starting at the fifth inning, the five run limit is no longer in effect. The innings are now over after 3 outs have been attained.

Each player must play a fielding position a minimum of three (3) innings. No player shall sit out two (2) consecutive innings.

No player, including the pitcher, may play the same position for more than four (4) innings or twelve (12) outs per game.

Division 3 & 4: Nine (9) defensive players will be used. A minimum of seven (7) players are required to play a game (start to finish).

Pitchers

1. The pitcher must present the ball with her pivot foot on the pitcher's plate and the non-pivot foot either in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate. Upon bringing her hands together, she may begin the wind up. She may step either forward or backward with the non-pivot foot while keeping the pivot foot in contact with the plate. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the ground until the ball is released. Leaping or crow hopping off the pitcher's plate will constitute an illegal pitch.
2. At all time during the pitching process, she must keep both feet within the width of the pitcher's plate.

Base Runners and Fielders

1. Infield Fly rule is in effect.
2. Batter should run to the orange 1st base and the fielder should use the white 1st base except on the occasion of a dropped third strike as explained in the "Rules of Play" section.
3. Sliding is allowed.
4. Runner is out when running more than three (3) feet from the base path.
5. Runner is out when struck with a fair untouched batted ball while not in contact with a base.
6. Runner is out when she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.
7. When a defensive player with the ball is between the runner and the base, including home plate, the runner is out if she remains on her feet and deliberately collides with the fielder. The runner's options are to slide or run around the fielder (but must be within three (3) feet of base path). A late slide that results in unnecessary contact with the fielder, in the judgment of the umpire, will result in an out and possible ejection from the game (if there was malicious intent to injure or dislodge the ball), at the discretion of the umpire.
8. A fielder, without the ball, blocking a runner's path to a base is an "obstruction". The runner is not out and awarded the next base.
9. A runner is not out when running behind or in front of the fielder and outside the base line in order to avoid interfering with the fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.

ALL EQUIPMENT – (BATTERS AND CATCHERS) SHALL BE WORN AT ALL TIMES – PRACTICES, WARM-UPS AND GAMES