

NORTH GROUNDS SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES 2009-2010

Generally, the ASA Official Softball rules govern NGSL play. The following modifications qualify the ASA rules.

PROCEDURES & RULES

1. **Appeals:** Umpires are empowered to make all decisions affecting play. **Appeals on the application of the Rules may be made; however, an umpire's judgment call cannot be appealed.** For instance, appealing the application of the infield fly rule is permitted as an appeal on the application of the Rules; however, appealing whether a runner was safe or out is not permitted since determining whether a runner was safe or out is a judgment call. Appeals will be considered only if the subject matter has a substantial effect on the outcome of the game. Formal appeals must be submitted in writing within 48 hours of the completion of the game. Any appeal will be acted upon by the Head Umpire and the Head Commissioner.
2. **Reporting Wins:** The captain of the winning team must report all wins to the Head Commissioner by sending an email message to uvalawsoftball@gmail.com.
3. **Replacement Players:** During regular season play, teams composed of players who are members of more than the permitted number of unaffiliated teams will not be subject to forfeit. In fact, team captains are encouraged to find replacement players as necessary in order to prevent forfeits. In the playoffs, however, "ringers" cannot play (see Rule 17).
4. **# People on the Field:** There can be up to ten (10) defensive players on the field at any given time. In the Co-Rec League, four (4) of the ten (10) players must be women. Any team unable to field seven (7) defensive players will forfeit the game (see Rule 10). In order to encourage maximum participation, the NGSL permits batting order of unlimited size.
5. **Batting Order:** A player may be in the batting order and not play in the field. In order to play in the field, however, a player must be in the batting order. A player dropped from the batting order will be called out by the umpire, unless the umpire finds that there are exigent circumstances. Exigent circumstances include but are not limited to sickness, injury, class and interviews.
6. **Length of Games:** Games are normally seven (7) innings long, but no new inning may begin fifty-five (55) after the start of the game. This rule applies to all games except for the semi-final and final playoff games in both leagues.

7. **Mercy Rule:** The umpire will call the game in favor of the winning team if after four (4) innings (3 ½ if the home team is winning) the winning team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs, or if after five (5) innings (4 ½ if the home team is winning) the winning team is ahead by ten (10) runs.
8. **Darkness/Weather:** Should darkness or adverse weather prevent seven (7) completed innings, the game will be considered officially complete after four (4) full innings have been played or after three and a half (3 ½) innings if the home team is winning. An incomplete game should be rescheduled to begin from the point at which play was suspended.
9. **Tie Game:** Regular Season games that are tied after a game is officially completed under Rules 6, 7, or 8 will not be rescheduled or replayed.
10. **Forfeit:** A game will be declared a forfeit if a team is unable to field at least seven (7) players within five (5) minutes after the scheduled starting time. **Any team that forfeits two (2) times during a season will be ineligible from participating in the playoffs.** If a team is unable to field at least seven (7) players, the captain MUST cancel the game prior to the start of the game by following the “Canceling Game” Procedure.
11. **Canceling a Game:** You **MUST:** (1) inform the other captain, and (2) e-mail uvalawsoftball@gmail.com. A failure to cancel a scheduled game within one (1) hour of the scheduled game time will result in a forfeit. By canceling in accordance with a rule, you will not be charged with a forfeit.
12. **Make-up Games:** Available slots for make-up games will be marked on the ngsl.com calendar as “Open.” If you would like to fill one of these open spots, email uvalawsoftball@gmail.com to reserve the slot; open slots will be filled on a first-come, first served basis.
13. **No metal spikes may be worn.**
14. **Eligible Players:** All players must be students or employees, or spouses of either thereof, of the Law, Darden, Medical, or JAG schools.
15. **Liability Waiver:** In order to be eligible, a player must sign the liability waiver included at page 2 of the league registration form. It is a **captain’s responsibility** not to field players unless they have signed an NGSL liability waiver for the current season.
16. **Playoffs:** The Head Commissioner and the Head Umpire shall, at the end of the season, create playoff brackets for the Regular, and Co-Rec leagues. Teams will be seeded according to (1) their win-loss record during that season, (2) the number of games played during the season (3) run differential. Two (2) forfeits make a team ineligible for the playoffs. (Please note that it is the responsibility of the team captain to report that team’s win-loss record to the NGSL.) The Head Commissioner and the Head Umpire have the

discretion to further limit the number of teams who make the playoffs, but their decision will be based on seeding.

17. **Playoff Rosters:** At the outset of the playoffs, players must select only one Regular League team and one Co-Rec League team to play with for the entirety of the playoffs. The only exception to this rule is that, in each league, a player may play for one (1) unaffiliated team and any team whose underlying group (section, club, alumni group, or journal) the player is affiliated with. To be affiliated with a group, the player must actually be a member of that group. Any Co-Rec player who is on multiple teams must choose one (1) team that he or she will play for in both the semi-finals and finals of the playoffs. A player must be on the roster before the playoffs begin in order to play. In other words, no “ringers” can be used for the playoffs. **A team using players in violation of any of the provisions of this rule forfeits its remaining playoff games.**
18. **Ejecting Players:** The umpire has the discretion, without issuing a warning, to eject a player whose actions/attitude are disruptive, unruly, or provide such a disturbance as to affect the game. Additionally, umpires must eject all players who curse directly at an umpire, aggressively approach an umpire, or touch an umpire while arguing a call. An ejected player must leave the field and the surrounding area immediately. The Head Commissioner and the Head Umpire have the discretion to suspend an ejected player for additional games based on the severity of their infraction. Two (2) ejections in one season results in expulsion from the North Grounds Softball League for the remainder of the season, including the playoffs.
19. Any situations not here provided for will be resolved at the reasonable discretion of the Head Commissioner and the Head Umpire.

THE GAME

1. Pitches must have a minimum arc of six (6) feet from the ground and a maximum arc of twelve (12) feet from the ground for both Co-Rec and Regular leagues. The umpire shall call a pitch not within the prescribed limits “illegal” as soon as possible. If the batter does not swing at an illegal pitch, it is automatically a ball. If the batter swings, however, the pitch shall be treated as if it had been thrown within the legal limits.
2. The strike zone is that space over any part of home plate which is between the batter’s highest shoulder and the batter’s lowest knee when the batter is lined up with the plate. In the Co-Rec and Regular leagues, a pitch that hits any part of the plate is automatically considered a ball.
3. **Three balls constitute a walk. Two strikes constitute a strikeout.** A foul ball will count as a batter’s first strike, but not the second strike unless the ball travels below the batter’s head and is caught by the catcher. **For all Co-Rec players (male and female), the third foul ball hit while the**

batter has two strikes constitutes a strikeout. For all Regular League players, the second foul ball hit while the batter has two strikes constitutes a strikeout.

4. **A ball hit into the road shall constitute a home run.** A ball hit into a tree in fair territory that becomes lodged in the tree shall be a ground rule double. The umpire has the discretion to limit the advance of the batter or base runners if some obstruction other than the trees in the outfield has unfairly prevented the outfielder from retrieving the softball when the player might otherwise have done so.
5. The umpire's fair/foul call will be determined by where the ball hits the trees, not by where the ball lands. Any ball hitting the trees in fair territory may be caught for an out. On the other hand, any ball hitting the trees in foul territory or out of play may not be caught for an out. **The trees in the outfield are fair territory.** The following examples further explain this rule:
 - (a) A fly ball hitting the trees in fair territory is a fair ball even if it lands in foul territory.
 - (b) A fly ball hitting the trees in foul territory is a foul ball even if it lands in fair territory.
 - (c) A fly ball hitting the trees in foul territory or out of play may not be caught for an out, even if it is caught in fair territory.
 - (d) A fly ball hitting a tree planted in foul territory, but striking the tree in fair territory, is a fair ball.
6. For the purpose of determining when a ball remains in play, the out of play lines are imaginary lines extending from the fences parallel with the foul lines. **If a batted ball goes out of play after landing in fair territory, it is a ground-rule double.** If a throw from any fielder goes out of play, the plate umpire shall award each runner one (1) additional base. If a runner is in between bases when a ball goes out of play, the umpire shall have the discretion to award an additional base to the runner.

Ex. If a runner is approaching second base when a ball from the outfield is thrown over the backstop, the player may be awarded third base if the umpire believes that the runner would have reached third base had the ball remained in play.
7. In a double play situation arising from a ball hit to an infielder, the lead runner may not obstruct the fielder's throw by remaining upright in the base path. **If the lead runner fails to slide or run out of the "line of fire", the umpire shall call the play as if the double play had been completed.** This rule applies at second, third, or home whenever there is a force play. It

applies regardless of whether the double play otherwise would have been successful. This rule does not apply if there is no play at the lead base.

8. The umpire shall declare a runner out if the runner initiates significant contact with a fielder attempting to make a play at second base, third base, or home plate. Rule of thumb: Slide if there is a close play at any base. All collisions at first base shall be resolved at the umpire's discretion.

SPECIAL CO-REC RULES

1. A fielding line-up is limited to ten (10) persons: six (6) or fewer men, four (4) or more women. If only three (3) women are present, a team may only play with nine (9) total fielders. A team may play with as few as seven (7) players, which must include at least three (3) women. **No team may play with less than three (3) women.** Unlimited substitution is permitted in and out of the batting and fielding line-ups, except that no player may change slots in the batting order.
2. **When any batter, male or female, is batting, all outfielders must play behind the Co-Rec line drawn in the outfield until the ball is hit.** Violation of this Rule shall result in the batter being awarded first base and all other baserunners being advanced one base regardless of whether the batter swings. If the Co-Rec line is not readily apparent the umpire shall determine a reasonable Co-Rec line distance at his or her discretion.
3. Every third batter must be a woman.
4. Co-Rec teams may have two separate line-ups – one for men and one for women. The women's batting order may start a second time before the men's batting order is completed. Similarly, the men's batting order may start a second time before the women's batting order is completed. Co-Rec teams may also have one batting line-up, in which case every woman must bat once before a man may bat more than once.
5. In regular season play, no player may be intentionally walked without pitching to the batter. If the umpire determines that the pitcher is wasting time, or pitching deliberately wild, the umpire may warn the pitcher. In playoff play, players may be intentionally walked, but the walked player and his/her teammates may justifiably deride the cowardice of the pitcher and his/her teammates. **In both regular season and playoff play, if a male player is walked on three pitches immediately preceding a female batter, the female batter is given the option of also taking a walk or remaining at the plate. If she elects to hit instead of taking a walk, the male base runner still advances to second base.**
6. **All bats in all leagues must be ASA approved. Accordingly, every bat used in league play must have the ASA certification mark.**