

2019 PJBA SOFTBALL RULES - - JR MISS 12U DIVISION

SPORTSMANSHIP

The purpose of the program shall be to implement in the youth of the community ideals of good sportsmanship – honesty, loyalty, courage, and reverence, so they be finer, stronger, and happier young people who will grow to be good, clean, healthy adults. This objective is to be reached by providing supervised fun, safe, and competitive athletic games. The Commissioner shall bear in mind at all times the attainment of exceptional athletic skills or the winning of games is secondary and the molding of **future citizens is of prime importance.**

Players, Coaches, and/or Parents displaying un-sportsman-like conduct may be removed from fields that day, the next game, or (up to) removal from program. Umpires will notify the commissioner of any incident immediately; final decision will be voted on by directors. Board President may over-ride director's vote.

General Rules as listed in the SEMCL Rule Book

Sportsmanship and Coaches' Code of Conduct:

The SEMCL mandates fair play and good sportsmanship by all coaches, players, parents, and umpires at all times. Prior to the beginning of each season, each coach and assistant coach is required to sign the league's "Coaches' Code of Conduct" contract (Appendix B) which is to be filed with the Area Commissioner for each town. Coaches will not be allowed to participate in any practices or games until the contract is on file. Additionally, the "Coaches' Code of Conduct" contract will be signed and presented to the tournament director prior to the start of the end-of-the season tournament. No coach will be allowed to participate in any tournament game until the contract is on file with the tournament director.

During time of play, head coaches (not assistant coaches) may ask for clarification from an umpire on a call, provided that the request is reasonable and respectful, and does not delay the game significantly.

Coaches will not engage in any behavior that intentionally delays the progress of a game.

Any player/coach ejected due to unsportsmanlike conduct shall be suspended for the remainder of the game in which they were ejected plus one additional game. If they were ejected during the first game of a double-header, they would not be eligible for the 2nd game of the double-header. Any coach ejected from a game during the end-of-the season tournament is automatically suspended for all remaining games in the tournament. Any ejection should also be reported to the Area Commissioner of the offending team. The local Commissioner should then contact the League Commissioner as a follow-up to the incident.

Registration

- Players that register for a town's Summer League program must reside within the school district boundaries. Exceptions must be approved by both the "losing" and "gaining" Summer League commissioners prior to team drafts being conducted. For example, if a Tri Valley player registers for LeRoy Summer League, both the Tri-Valley and LeRoy commissioners must approve prior to the LeRoy draft. This rule does not apply when consolidating teams due to registration numbers.
- Player Eligibility: Players must be 12 years of age or under on April 30.
 - *Starting in the 2020 season – SEMCL will change the date of birth cut off from April 30th for boys and girls (all levels) to a Jan 1 deadline for Girls (all levels). 2019 Season will remain April 30th for boys and girls (all levels).*

Regulatory Bodies

Play is based on NFHS (National Federation of High Schools) Rules; defined by the IESA and IHSA. Exceptions (injury, illness) to the rules as defined, must have the approval of the League Commissioner.

Game Specifics (Time and Innings)

- A complete game will consist of all innings (specified in each level) being played or the time limit being reached.

- A new inning will not start after the specified tie for that level.
- Once the time limit is reached, the inning in progress is completed, unless the “Visiting” team is still behind after their turn at bat (e.g. no need for the “home” team to still bat in the bottom half of the inning).
- No inning will start after 8:00 PM on a field without lights.
- Forfeits
 - There are no forfeits due to the lack of players. This is a participation league and hopefully the opposing team will provide additional player(s) so a game could be played.

Safety

- All base runners and batters must wear a protective helmet. Non-factory installed face masks/guard on batting helmets are allowed.
- All girls levels (8U-14U) are required to wear a facemask while in the field (infield and outfield). Coaches are encouraged to carry a couple facemasks in their equipment bag.
- Throwing the bat is not allowed. An automatic out will be awarded to any player who throws a bat. There will be no warnings for a 1st time offense by either team (umpire judgment call).
- No jewelry.
- No metal spikes.
- Weather: During any kind of inclement weather (Extreme Heat or wind, Lightning, etc) – We will follow the same rules/guidelines as the IHSA if not specifically stated/explained in the SEMCL Rules.

Bat and Helmet Rules

- *Starting in the 2020 season for all levels* – The SEMCL will no longer post specific length/weight restrictions for bat sizes and will follow the IESA rules/regulations on bat length/weight/size. SEMCL will also follow IESA rules/regulations on batting helmets and facemasks on batting helmets.
- For the 2019 season an approved bat is any IESA approved bat or any bat that is 2 1/2 inches or less.
 - We are allowing this exception to the IESA rules for 2019 only to reduce financial burden of parents that already purchased a bat for this season or purchased a bat last year.
 - All 2 5/8 bats must adhere to current IESA rules.

Field Specifications:

- 60-foot base paths
- 40-foot pitching distance
- 16-foot diameter pitching circle centered around the pitching rubber
- The batter’s box shall be 7 feet long. The front of the batter’s box shall be 4 feet forward from the center of home plate and 3 feet wide starting 6 inches from the plate.

Line-Up:

A full line-up will consist of TEN players. Coaches with more than 10 players on their roster may choose to allow all of their players to be included in the batting order. However, only 10 players are allowed on the field to play defense. Coaches choosing to allow their entire team to bat must inform the opposing coach and umpire prior to the start of the game. If the whole team is included in the batting order, then there cannot be any changes in the batting order. An injured player’s batting spot may be skipped without incurring an out.

Game Length

- Single Game: 1hr 45min or 6 innings.
- Double Header: 1hr 15min or 6 innings.
- Tournament Games: 1hr 45min or 6 innings.

- Ten (10) run rule applies after 4 1/2 innings. If the “Visiting” team leads by 10 runs at the conclusion of the 5th inning, the “Visiting” team wins. If the “Home” team obtains a 10 run lead anytime after the “Visiting” team has finished batting in the 5th inning, the “Home” team is declared the winner.
- Fifteen (15) run rule applies after 3 complete innings of play. If any team obtains a 15 run lead
- after completing the 3rd or subsequent innings of play, they are declared the winner. Ten (10) run rule also applies after 4 1/2 (5) innings of play as defined in the NFHS rules book.

Infield Fly Rule: Infield Fly Rule is in affect.

Scoring:

A complete inning will consist of 3 outs or 6 runs. Unlimited run limit applies to the 6th inning only. *(Please note the 10 run limit does not apply to the last inning of the game, due to time limits or other constraints, unless the last inning is the 6th inning.)*

Batting:

- Bunting is allowed. No swinging at the ball from the bunt position. As a reminder, a foul-bunted ball with 2 strikes shall result in an out.
- Dropped 3rd Strike Rule:
 - An uncaught third strike (sometimes inaccurately referred to as a dropped third strike) occurs when the catcher fails to cleanly catch a pitch for the third strike. A pitch is considered uncaught if the ball touches the ground before being caught, or if the ball is dropped to the ground after being caught.
 - On an uncaught third strike, the batter immediately becomes a runner if either of the following:
 - First base is unoccupied.
 - There are two outs (regardless of whether there is a runner on first). The strike is called, but the umpire does not call the batter out. The umpire may also actively signal that there is "no catch" of the pitch. The batter may then attempt to reach first base, and must be tagged or thrown out. If the runner enters the dugout, the runner is out.

Pitching:

- Pitchers cannot wear batting gloves, tape, or wristbands on the pitching hand.
- Pitchers may only pitch 4 consecutive innings per game. (1 pitch constitutes an inning)
- Hit by Pitch
 - In order to be awarded first base on a hit by pitch, a batter must have made an effort to avoid being hit in the judgment of the umpire. For example, a batter will not be awarded 1st base on a wild pitch that rolls on the ground and hits the batter since the batter would have ample time to avoid being hit by the ball.
- Intentional Walks
 - Each team will only be allowed 1 intentional walk per game.

Base Running:

- Base runners are NOT permitted to lead off bases until the pitch leaves the pitcher’s hand.
- Base runners may attempt to steal any base (including home) after the pitch leaves the pitcher’s hand.
- When the ball is in the pitching circle, runners must commit to the next base or return to the previous base immediately. Failure to commit will result in a warning to both benches. Any subsequent violation by either team will result in an out being called. **(This is an IESA softball rule, just restating it for emphasis).**
- Runners must slide feet-first on a close play. Headfirst slides are illegal. Runners will be called out if they fail to slide on a close play **(umpire judgement call).**

- Defensive players (including catchers) cannot block the base / home plate with any part of their body or equipment in an attempt to prevent the base runner from contacting the base/home plate unless player is in possession of the ball. The base is automatically awarded to the runner if a defensive player intentionally blocks any base / home plate without possession of the baseball (**umpire judgement call**).
- Orange Safety Bag
 - The batter-runner should use the orange portion only on the first attempt at first base. A runner is never out for touching the white base rather than the orange portion. Once the runner reaches first base, the runner shall then use only the white base. The defensive player may use only the white portion of the bag in making any play at first. One exception: on a missed third strike the first baseman may use the orange portion for the putout throw from the catcher. A batted ball must hit totally in the orange to be foul.

Equipment:

- Softballs: 12" softball will be used. Home team will furnish 2 good, clean Optic Yellow balls.
- Facemasks: All girls will be required to wear a facemask while in the field (infield or outfield).
- Catchers gear: Catchers must wear legal protective equipment; mask, helmet, throat guard, chest protector, shin guards.
- Bat Regulations: ***See Bat and Helmet Rules under General Rules Section***

Substitutions:

- No Designated Hitters (DH) or Courtesy Runners are allowed.
- A starter removed from the game may re-enter the game at any field position (*except for the restrictions on pitching restrictions on pitching*) provided the substitute has played 3 outs and batted once. The starter must be re-entered in the same place in the batting order.
- Once a pitcher is taken out as a pitcher, she cannot re-enter the position of pitcher.
- Unlimited defensive substitutions are allowed.

Postseason Tournament: All other rules from the regular season shall apply unless specified in the Tournament Rules.

Line-Up:

Teams may begin play with nine (9) players without being penalized. However, less than nine (9) players a team will be penalized one (1) out per missing player. For example, if a team has only eight (8) players then every time the ninth batter position in the batting order came up to bat, the offensive team will be given an automatic out. In theory, a team could play during a tournament with only six (6) players and every time the seventh, eighth and ninth batter came up in the batting order, they would each be considered an automatic out.

Umpires:

Two (2) patched umpires must be on the field for every tournament game.

General:

- Tournament Games: 1hr 45min or 7 innings
- Forfeit time is game time. If a team is not present and ready to play at the scheduled start time, the game will be forfeited.
- One new ball from each team per game must be provided.
- Pre-game infield is not allowed.

Appendix A

Southeast McLean County Travel League Coach's Code of Conduct Form

The Southeast McLean County Travel (SEMCL) League expects good sportsmanship from all coaches, players, and parents before, during, and after all games. As a coach for a team in the league, you agree to set a positive example for your players by abiding by the following code of conduct:

- Coaches must refrain from using profane language and any other unacceptable behavior.
- All players, regardless of abilities, must be treated fairly at all times.
- The SEMCL is a participation league that will help develop self-esteem and the concept of team sports in each player who participates. League policy requires that all players will play a minimum of 1/2 of the total innings in all games during the season.
- Coaches are prohibited from playing ineligible players who are not properly rostered on the team.
- Umpires must be treated with respect at all times by coaches, parents, and players. All calls made by umpires are considered final, and must be accepted as such.
- Umpires may eject any coach from a game for arguing or other inappropriate behavior.
- According to league policy, any coach ejected due to unsportsmanlike conduct shall be suspended for the remainder of the game in which he/she was ejected plus one additional game.
- According to league policy, any coach ejected from a game during the end-of-the season tournament is automatically suspended for all remaining games in the tournament.
- Coaches should not engage in any behavior that intentionally delays the progress of a game.
- Tournament directors have the authority to oversee the play of all games, and may need to adjust the length of games due to inclement weather or other circumstances.

Note: A signed copy of the following form must be submitted by every head coach and assistant coach to the local commissioner prior to the start of any regular season practices/games, and also submitted to tournament director prior to any tournament games. Coaches who do not have a signed form on file will be prohibited from coaching any SEMCL games.

Appendix B

Softball & Baseball Rules for Orange Safety Bags Rules

- The safety base is designed to prevent collisions and other contact incidents at first base. The first baseman and other defensive players are allowed only to touch the white portion of the safety base during play. If a defensive player's foot touches the orange portion of the base, the umpire may call interference and award the runner a free base. This is an umpire's judgment call.
- On offense, the runner may touch only the orange portion of the base during close plays. Because a runner is allowed to run through first base, he may run straight through the orange half, remaining in foul territory. If he touches the white half on a play at first, the defensive team may appeal the play. If the umpire noticed the runner's foot placement, he will be called out. If there is no play to be made at first base, such as on a hit that will result in a double, the batter-runner may touch the white half of the base while making his turn toward second.
- Batted balls that hit the white portion of the base are fair, while balls that hit the orange half are foul.