

GREATER ALTOONA GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION
COACHES HANDBOOK & LEAGUE RULES
Revised January 2018

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PREFACE AND CODE OF CONDUCT

This handbook has been designed to provide coaches with an overview of policies and procedures followed by the Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association, as they pertain to the coaches and their teams.

The Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association has the following code of conduct for coaches registered in our league:

1. Coaches must treat all players with respect, fairness and as equal members of the team.
2. Coaches shall make an attempt to give all players assigned to the team an equal opportunity to participate in games. However, the coach may adjust playing time due to tardiness, unexcused absences from practices or games or for behavioral problems.
3. Coaches are expected to follow the policies of the league as outlined in this manual and in the game rules.
4. Coaches must ensure that they, and their players, follow good sportsmanship.
5. Coaches are expected to cooperate with and assist league officials.
6. Coaches will submit to a background check.

USSSA MEMBERSHIP

The Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association is a member of the USSSA. All teams registered with the league are also members of USSSA. Rules of play may be found in the USSSA Fastpitch Rules & By-Laws located on the GAGSA website. Any additional rules regarding play will be communicated to the coaches.

AWARDS CEREMONY

All players will receive either a participation award or a first, second or third place trophy/medal depending on their team's standing in league play. The awards ceremony will be held as close to the end of the season as is feasible, dates of which will be determined on a year to year basis.

BATTING CAGES AND PITCHING LANES

The Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association owns permanent batting cages and pitching lanes that are located north of Field 2. The batting cages and pitching lanes may be reserved or used on a first come first serve basis if they are not reserved. Check the GAGSA web site for the schedule. Use of the batting cages and pitching lanes is limited to one hour per team unless no one is waiting for a turn. It is the responsibility of coaches to ensure the following:

1. All players are wearing helmets when inside the cage.
2. Only one player is allowed inside the cage at any one time.
3. Only the registered coach or an assistant coach may operate the pitching machines.
4. Coaches are responsible for returning all equipment to their proper storage area.
5. Once a batter's turn has begun, no one else may be inside the cage.

The batting cages and pitching lanes are available from the first day of the practice season until the last day of the regular season. Any coach interested in using the batting cage can be instructed on the operation of the pitching machine before the first time it is used. Contact a Board member for a demonstration. Players that are not participating in the Greater Altoona

Girls Softball programs are required to reserve the batting cages or pitching lanes before use. Please see the field rental agreement on the GAGSA web site for details and cost. Greater Altoona Girls Softball Board Members reserve the right to remove anyone who is unauthorized to use the batting cages and/or pitching lanes or who is not using them for the intended use.

CALLING UP PLAYERS

When a team cannot reach the allowable number of players for a given game, they may call players up to participate in a game. These call ups are limited to **registered** players in the immediately preceding division only, **regardless of their age**. (i.e. 6U players may be called up to 8U, 8U players may be called up to 10U, etc.).

The Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association will provide coaches with a list of names of players that they may contact for call-up purposes. Coaches must allow any girl from their team that wishes to "play up" to do so unless it interferes with an assigned game for the girl's regular team. You may not call a player "down" from an older league.

With prior consent of the League Director, coaches may call up one (1) pitcher or one (1) catcher if, due to absence only, they do not have one at game time. The Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association strongly urges coaches to develop more than one pitcher and more than one catcher so that this becomes necessary only as a last option.

CONCESSION STAND POLICIES

The purpose of the concession stand is to provide refreshments for players, parents and friends for a reasonable profit. The income from the concession stand is used to offset the cost of operating the concession stand, to pay for the cost of umpires and to offset other expenses the league incurs.

All volunteers must be at least 14 years of age. A minimum of two adults is required in the concession stand at all times.

The Concessions Manager or Board Member on duty will explain what is expected of each volunteer and show them how to operate the machines.

EQUIPMENT

Equipment such as practice softballs, catcher's gear, bats and a scorebook are provided to each team by the league. As stated previously, the league will also provide USSSA rules to each coach on the GAGSA website. The Equipment Manager or League Director will notify teams of the equipment pickup date. Any problems with equipment should be directed to the Equipment Manager. Each coach is responsible for the safekeeping of the equipment and its prompt return upon completion of the season. All equipment must be turned in directly to the Equipment Manager or League Director for proper validation of their return.

The Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association will NOT enforce the USSSA bat stamp rule that is effective January 1, 2014.

See also, Uniforms, below.

FIELD MAINTENANCE

It is the responsibility of all coaches to check the grounds before games to ensure that the playing surface is safe and playable. Repairs should be made before games are begun. Consult the Board Member on Duty for any repairs needed. If this is not possible, then the coaches must contact their League Director for a ruling. It is the coaches' responsibility to work on fields after rain showers to make surfaces playable again. This includes raking infields after rains and periodically during the season. Surfaces not cared for in this manner may cause accidents that could have been avoided. Field Managers will take every precaution necessary to have the fields ready. The Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association provides equipment such as shovels, rakes, drags, wheelbarrows and a mower/tractor. These are stored in the equipment shed and garage.

Coaches are also responsible for maintaining order and cleanliness in the equipment shed. All equipment should be put back on the appropriate shelves; empty chalk bags and loose chalk should be disposed of in the trash containers provided.

FUNDRAISER

In order to keep registration fees low and generate funds for improvements, the league holds an annual fundraiser. This usually begins at the start of the practice season. All teams are encouraged to participate in the fundraising effort. The Fundraising Manager will provide all teams with the information necessary for coaches and players to make the fundraiser a success. Players must turn all order forms and money in by the required due dates.

In lieu of fundraising, GAGSA may charge a minimal fee at registration to cover administrative costs of running the league. This will be identified as the 'Capital Improvement Fee'. This charge is not eligible for a reduction and must be paid in full before participation.

GAME PREPARATION

The home team is the first team listed on the schedule. The home team is responsible for chalking the field (baselines, batter's box, pitcher's circle, running lanes & coaches' box). A diagram of the chalking of fields can be found in the sheds with the chalkers. If the infield has not been drug recently, then this should be done before your game by a GAGSA Board member. The visiting team will be responsible for raking the batter's box, pitcher's circle and baselines and around each base after the game.

Umpires will pick up game balls from the Board Member on Duty when they check in for field assignments.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

The league obtains insurance coverage for coaches and players through USSSA and is a portion of the registration fee charged. This is supplemental insurance coverage, which serves as a secondary policy to the player's parents'/guardians' own policy. All coaches and Board Members are covered by a liability policy and players are covered by \$250,000 medical policy. The medical policy pays for expenses not reimbursed by any other insurance company that is covering the player. There is a \$250 deductible on each occurrence. The deductible is the responsibility of the parents/guardians of the injured player. The Association President must be

notified of accidents within 24 hours of the occurrence. For more details on the policy, contact the Association President.

PARKING

Parking is provided to the north of the softball complex. Reserved space is marked for handicap parking. Only authorized vehicles may enter the access road to the Concession Stand. Violation of this rule may result in a ticket from the Altoona Police Department.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

It is the goal of the Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association to encourage development of players throughout the year(s), and team coaches are encouraged to work with players to develop skills and abilities. However, a player will not develop to their fullest potential without active and consistent involvement by a parent or guardian through time and practice spent *outside* of designated league team practice times and games.

PRACTICES

Practice times will be assigned prior to the start of the practice season. Coaches may sign up for additional practice times as available. The assigned times will end with the first day of the regular season. Teams may practice on a first come first serve basis at any time that does not conflict with a scheduled practice or game. If practicing before another team's scheduled game, please leave the field at least 45 minutes before the scheduled game. Practices may be held at any schoolyard, park, or other area where space is available. Practice is encouraged and important to the development of the players.

PROTEST, COMPLAINTS OR OTHER PROBLEMS

The umpire's decisions are final during the game and Board Members may not attempt to influence an umpire's judgement during a game. Coaches should have access to the USSSA rules and any other rules set by the league, during games.

The following rules apply to the filing of a protest during the regular season:

1. The umpire in charge of the game in question and the opposing coach must be notified at the time of the alleged action and prior to the next pitch following the alleged action.
2. A protest form must be submitted to a GAGSA Board member within 24 hours of the completion of the game in question.
3. A fee of \$20 must be submitted, in cash, along with the written protest.
4. The League Director will discuss the situation and recommend what action should be taken to the Executive Board Members that have no conflict of interest as to the protest (as determined by the League Director).
5. The Executive Board Members will either vote to approve the recommendation or may agree upon an alternative course of action.
6. Agreement by the Executive Board Members will be by majority vote. Any ties in the voting (due to an abstention by any voting member) will be broken by the League Director.
7. Decisions will be made and parties notified, no later than 24 hours after receipt of the protest by the League Director.

8. Decisions by the Executive Board are final and may not be appealed.
9. The \$20 fee will be refunded if the protest is upheld.

Note: A legitimate protest should not question any judgement calls by the umpire. This would result in automatically disallowing the protest and the Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association would retain the \$20 fee.

Any protest of decisions during the League Tournament will be decided at the time of the game. Decisions will be made by Umpire and Executive Board Member that is present. All decisions are final and may not be appealed. For the League Tournament, protest of calls must be made before the next play occurs. If the play in questions is the last play of the game, the protest must be made to the umpire immediately before leaving the field.

RULES

The Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association strives to abide by the USSSA rulebook. The USSSA rules will apply, unless a specific rule is set forth in a division's rules in the Addendums below. No "coach agreed rules" are to be used during any game. Violation will result in a forfeit for both teams. This handbook and the USSSA rulebook will be used on all other disputed matters. The home plate umpire will announce the official start time of the game and is in control of the game after the official start. Failure to comply with any of the above rules, or being ejected from a game by an umpire, will be grounds for the Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association Board to remove a coach or other team representative from the team.

SCHEDULING

The League Director or Umpire/Field Scheduler develops the schedule of practices and games. Each coach will be provided with a copy of the league schedule when completed. The League Director will be responsible for disbursing schedules to the coaches. **Only the Board Member on duty or Umpire Field/Scheduler may cancel a scheduled game.** Rescheduling games is done by a cooperative effort between the League Director, Umpire/Field Scheduler and the Board Member on Duty. The league sanctions only games scheduled and rescheduled in this manner.

Cancellations:

The Board Member on duty shall notify all parties regarding game conditions by use of the gagsa.org website and text messaging update. Decisions to cancel or delay games will be made at least one hour prior to the start of games, if possible. Remember that cancellations and delays may be due to existing or anticipated weather patterns. Volunteers scheduled to work in the Concession Stand should also check for cancellations or delays.

Rescheduling:

The League Director may request input from the coaches involved. However, **final say on rescheduling rests with the League Director and Umpire Field/Scheduler.** After the League Director and the Umpire Field/Scheduler have agreed to a rescheduling date, the League Director will be responsible for notifying the coaches involved. The Umpire

Field/Scheduler will secure the necessary umpires. The League Director will also be responsible for updating the season schedule.

SPECTATORS

Cheering is encouraged; however, screaming and yelling at the opposing team in an unsportsmanlike manner will not be tolerated. Umpires may ask spectators to move to the parking area if their behavior is unacceptable.

TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Both teams may have three (3) adults in the dugout during a game: (1) the coach, (2) the assistant coach, and (3) the team parent. No non-players will be allowed in the dugout. All trash must be removed from the dugout prior to leaving.

THREE INNING RULE

Girls should play 3 consecutive innings of each game (but see Preface and Code of Conduct, number 2). If this is not possible due to shortness of a game, that girl should start and play 3 consecutive innings of the next game (but see Preface and Code of Conduct, number 2). This system ensures that every girl will be given an opportunity to field every game. Coaches should strive to give every girl a fair and equitable percentage of playing time. However, a situation may arise when the Three Inning Rule may not be applied. (See Preface and Code of Conduct, number 2).

TOBACCO

The use of tobacco or electronic cigarette is prohibited at all times by anyone on the fields, in the dugouts or in attendance at Sam Wise Complex.

TOURNAMENTS

The Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association may sponsor USSSA tournament teams. The teams will be chosen through tryouts administered by the Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association and/or the Southeast Polk High School softball coaching staff.

Please contact the Tournament Director for more information.

UNIFORMS

The League Director will distribute uniforms during the practice season. Shirts will be purchased each year per sizes listed on the registration forms. Any problems with uniforms should be directed to the League Director. Shirts will be kept by players each year and do not need to be returned.

All players may wear either long pants OR shorts with sliding shorts and sliding pads. Players are responsible for providing their own pants, shorts, sliding shorts and sliding pads (if shorts are worn). Team members should be in the same uniforms, pants OR shorts, as set forth above. Sweatpants may be worn. Uniform shirts are to be tucked in during games. T-Ball players do not have requirements as to pants and may wear jeans or shorts.

Catchers must wear full protective gear at all times, including a mask and throat protector. No metal cleats will be allowed. All batters and base runners must wear a helmet in warm-ups,

practices and during games. The Greater Altoona Girls Softball Association provides softball helmets and bats to the players that do not have their own.

STARTING A GAME

Teams may start a game with eight players. There will **NOT BE AN AUTOMATIC OUT** because this team is already penalized by only having eight players on defense.

FIFTEEN MINUTE WAITING PERIOD TO START A GAME:

If a team does not have enough players (at least 8) at the start of a game, the team has 15 minutes to obtain enough players for a regulation game.

These call ups are limited to **registered** players in the immediately preceding division only, **regardless of their age.** (i.e. 6U players may be called up to 8U, 8U players may be called up to 10U, etc.). You may not call a player “down” from an older league.

If a team does not obtain the required number of players, that team forfeits.

GAGSA recommends that both teams play the game as a scrimmage with an umpire.

RECREATIONAL LEAGUE STANDINGS

8U League and above will have wins and losses tracked for league standings. The league standings will determine the League placing and the tournament seedings at the end of the season. In the event that a team is tied in the league standing, the following steps will take place:

1. Head to head match ups during league season between tied teams
2. Points allowed during the season
3. Points scored during the season

If teams are still tied at this point, places will be determined by a coin flip.

RECREATION LEAGUE END OF SEASON TOURNAMENT

Recreation League tournament may be held at the end of the season. 6U teams may play in a modified round robin tournament on the final day of the scheduled tournament. 8U League and above league standings will determine the tournament seedings and bracket at the end of the season. Specific tournament information may be found on the GAGSA web site.

SIX AND UNDER RULES

Regulation Game (during regular season and tournament)

1. A regulation game is the completion of 3 full innings.

Fielding

1. The distance between bases should be 60 feet.
2. Every player will play a defensive position each inning.
3. Each team should position one (1) catcher, one (1) pitcher [who must be in the pitcher's circle], one (1) first baseman, one (1) second baseman, one (1) third baseman and one (1) shortstop. The remaining players may be spread throughout the outer edge of the infield.
Coaches are encouraged to rotate players around the field.
4. Up to 2 adult coaches may be on the field - preferably the outfield fringe - to help position players, with an adult in the dugout at all times.
5. No stealing allowed. The runners may leave when the batter hits a fair ball.
6. Runners may advance only one base at a time, encouraging defensive players to attempt a play at the closest base. Only the last batter will be able run around all the bases on their hit.
7. Once the defensive play is attempted (ie: ball thrown to first base to attempt an out), the play will end and the defensive player will throw the ball back to the pitcher.
8. If the defence is successful making the out, the runner will be called out and will return to the dugout. Outs will not be kept track of during the inning.

Pitching

1. An 11-inch "soft" softball will be used.
2. The pitcher's rubber shall be surrounded by a chalked circle measuring 16-feet in diameter. The pitching distance is 35 feet from pitching rubber to back point of home plate.
3. The pitcher must stay on the pitching rubber until the batter hits the ball off the tee.
4. When the team coach is pitching, the pitcher/player must stay in the circle until the ball is hit.

Batting

1. A tee will be used for hitting for two innings. After two innings, a designated coach will pitch to his or her own team. All players will be included in the batting order at all times.
2. Each player will bat once each inning.
3. In the third inning, batters will be allowed six (6) pitches to hit the ball. If they do not hit it, they will have to hit the ball from the tee.
4. No balls or strikes will be called.
5. A side will not be retired by three (3) outs, but by the last batter of each inning.
6. NO SCORE SHALL BE KEPT.

EIGHT AND UNDER RULES

Regulation Game (during regular season and tournament)

1. A regulation game is 1 hour and 10 min or 6 innings. If an inning is in progress at the 1 hour and 10 min mark the inning may be completed. A new inning may not be started after the 1hr 10 min mark. A game may end in a tie.
2. **THE ENTIRE GAME WILL BE COACH PITCH.** The coach must pitch the ball from within the pitching circle.
3. The home team will be official score keeper, but both teams shall keep a scorebook. The home team is listed first on the schedule. Scorekeepers should let coaches know when 5 runs have been scored by a team in an inning.
4. The inning is over after three outs are recorded or 5 runs are scored.
5. An 11-inch "soft" softball will be used.
6. If your team is short players:
 - Your team may play with no less than 8 players.
 - **Your team does not need to take an out, there will be no automatic out taken.**
 - You may recruit GAGSA registered players from 6U. You may not use players from outside the league or from 8U.
 - If you do not have enough players to play, you will forfeit. However, if both coaches agree, the game may be played for "practice".
 - Your forfeit will be recorded as a loss. (7-0 for tournament seeding purposes)

Defense

1. Teams will be allowed to play with a maximum of 11 defensive players at a time.
2. All players will play a defensive position every inning but no more than 6 players, including the catcher, can be positioned inside the infield baselines. All other defensive players are required to be in the grass at the time of the pitch. **Coaches are encouraged to rotate players around the field.** The player pitcher must have at least one foot inside the pitcher's circle when the batter's coach is pitching. No other defensive players may be positioned inside the pitcher's circle at any time.
3. Players (both infield and outfield) are encouraged to make a play. Once the *attempt has been made or the ball has been thrown to the pitcher, the play has ended and runners may not advance unless they are half way to the next base. The ball will always be returned to the pitcher after an attempt or to end the play.

*attempt is defined as making an effort to make an out. Ex: Defensive player throws the ball to second baseman for a force out. Once the ball reaches the intended location, it does not matter if the runner is safe, out or it is an overthrow, the play stops and the ball is returned to the pitcher. A runner may continue to round the bases until an *attempt has been made.
4. Runners may not advance on an overthrow to any base.
5. Only two defensive coaches may be in the outfield in the grass; no contact with a live ball is allowed. Contact with a live ball results in a dead ball and an automatic double. A coach behind the catcher or in the infield is not allowed.

Offense

1. All players will be included in the batting lineup at all times. Coaches will provide the opposing team a lineup, no substitutions or pinch batters or runners are allowed. No positions will be skipped. In the event a batter is absent, that position will simply be skipped with no penalty.
2. A runner may continue to round the bases until an *attempted play has been made.
3. The batter's coach will make a maximum of 5 pitches to a batter. No balls or strikes will be called.
 - a. The adult pitcher is required to pitch from inside the pitching circle.
 - b. If a batter has not hit a fair ball, struck out (3 swinging strikes) or been put out after receiving the maximum number of pitches without completing any of these situations they will be called out. However, an at bat may not end on a foul ball and a batter will remain at bat as long as they continue to foul off pitches.
 - c. The catcher does not have to catch the third strike.
 - d. There shall be no walk awarded.
 - e. Batters may not bunt.
 - f. If the pitching coach is hit with a batted ball, it is an immediate dead ball and does not count as a pitch, the batter continues to bat.
2. The infield fly rule is not in effect.
3. No stealing or lead offs are allowed.
4. No more than three offensive coaches are allowed on the field including the pitching coach, 1st and 3rd base coaches.
5. Runs per inning: a maximum of 5 runs can be scored each inning for each team. There is no run rule to end the game.

Weather related delays during regular season and tournament:

If a game ends because of weather conditions and the GAGSA Board Member on Duty feels that the possibility of resuming the game is not likely, it is then a regulation game provided:

1. Three full innings have been played; or if the home team has scored an equal or greater number of runs in two or two and a fraction turns at bat than the visiting team has scored in their three-inning turn.
2. Play has gone beyond three full innings and is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed turn's at bats. The score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; unless the home team in its half of the incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, in which case, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.

If a game is suspended because of weather conditions, and later resumed because it does not meet the above requirements, the game will be continued from the point of suspension, with the line-up, batting order and baserunners of each team exactly the same as at the point of suspension.

TEN AND UNDER RULES

Regulation Game (during regular season and tournament)

1. USSSA rules will govern the length of the game. However, no inning may start after 1 hour 10 minutes has elapsed.
2. A regulation game is:
 - a. A game played a minimum of 1 hour and 10 minutes; or
 - b. A minimum of 3 innings; or
 - c. Has met the margin of run rules as stated in the USSSA Rule Book (8 runs after 5 innings).
3. If a game is tied after the 1 hour and 10 minute rule or is tied after completing the allowable innings, then the USSSA Tie Breaker Rule will be in effect.
4. If you do not have enough players to play, you will forfeit. However, if both coaches agree, the game may be played for "practice".
5. Your forfeit will be recorded as a loss (7-0 for tournament seeding purposes)

Fielding

1. Up to ten (10) players will be used on the field. One (1) will be in the outfield rover position.
2. The infield fly rule will apply, per the USSSA Rule Book. **Umpires should enforce the infield fly rule.**
3. USSSA rules will be followed as to base stealing, wherein players may steal one base at a time. A runner on 1st or 2nd can advance/steal only one base per pitch even in the event of an overthrow in live ball territory. A runner on 1st base can not run to 3rd on an overthrow to 2nd base while stealing. At end of play if the runner is safe and has advanced more than one base, the umpire will return the runner to the correct base. **Players may not steal home.**
4. If there is an overthrow to first base on a hit ball, the batter may run to second only. If there is a runner on first at the time, they may run to 3rd as can a runner on 2nd, attempt to score. The advanced base is not a "given", they are liable to be put out by tag. If there is an overthrow to any base on a hit ball, the runners can attempt the next base.

Pitching

1. An 11-inch hard softball will be used.
2. In accordance with the USSSA rulebook, the front of the pitching rubber to the back of home plate will be 35 feet.
3. Coaches are reminded of the 16-foot pitcher's circle as stated in the USSSA rulebook.
4. **Pitchers will be limited to three innings per game.**

Batting

1. All players will be included in the batting order at all times.
2. Each team is limited to scoring 5 runs or three outs in one inning, whichever happens first.
3. A batter will be out after 3 strikes, regardless of whether the ball is caught or dropped by the catcher on the third strike.
4. The batter may not run on the dropped third strike.
5. All other USSSA rules will apply.

Walk rule for 10U

Batters will NOT advance to first base on a walk. For purposes of this walk rule, a base on balls or a hit batter will count as a walk. Once a walk occurs, the hitting team will supply a coach to pitch to that batter from the pitching rubber and the coach will pitch a maximum of three pitches (In the extreme event that a hit batter cannot continue to bat because of injury, the batter will return to the dugout. No out or penalty will be called and play will continue.) The number of strikes thrown by the pitcher will remain and, at this point, the batter can STRIKEOUT but CANNOT WALK. The offensive coach will pitch to any batter walked by the defensive pitcher. (Example: batter walks with a count of 4-2, the coach will throw a maximum of three pitches and the batter can strike out swinging one time or on one called strike). However, an at bat may not end on a foul ball and a batter will remain at bat as long as they continue to foul off pitches. **No stealing or bunting when the coach is pitching.**

Weather related delays during regular season and tournament:

If a game ends because of weather conditions and the GAGSA Board Member on Duty feels that the possibility of resuming the game is not likely, it is then a regulation game provided:

1. Three full innings have been played; or if the home team has scored an equal or greater number of runs in two or two and a fraction turns at bat than the visiting team has scored in their three-inning turn.
2. Play has gone beyond three full innings and is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed turn's at bats. The score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; unless the home team in its half of the incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, in which case, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.

If a game is suspended because of weather conditions, and later resumed because it does not meet the above requirements, the game will be continued from the point of suspension, with the line-up, batting order and baserunners of each team exactly the same as at the point of suspension.

TWELVE AND UNDER RULES

Regulation Game (during regular season and tournament)

1. USSSA rules will govern the length of the game. However, no inning may start after 1 hour 10 minutes has elapsed.
2. A regulation game is:
 - a. A game played a minimum of 1 hour and 10 minutes; or
 - b. A minimum of 3 innings; or
 - c. Has met the margin of run rules as stated in the USSSA rulebook (8 runs after 5 innings).
3. If a game is tied after the 1 hour and 10 minute rule or is tied after completing the allowable innings, then the USSSA tiebreaker rule will be in effect.
4. If you do not have enough players to play, you will forfeit. However, if both coaches agree, the game may be played for “practice”.
5. Your forfeit will be recorded as a loss (7-0 for tournament seeding purposes)

Fielding

1. A maximum of nine (9) defensive players will be used on the field.
2. The USSSA rulebook will be followed as to base running.
3. The infield fly rule applies, per the USSSA book.

Pitching

1. A 12-inch hard softball will be used.
2. The front of the pitching rubber to the back of home plate will be 40 feet.
3. Coaches are reminded of the 16-foot pitcher’s circle as stated in the USSSA rulebook.
4. **Pitchers will be limited to pitching four innings per game.**

Batting

1. All players will be in the batting order.
2. Each team is limited to 5 runs or three outs in one inning, whichever happens first.
3. **Batters may run on a dropped third strike.**
4. All other USSSA rules will apply.

Weather related delays during regular season and tournament:

If a game ends because of weather conditions and the GAGSA Board Member on Duty feels that the possibility of resuming the game is not likely, it is then a regulation game provided:

1. Three full innings have been played; or if the home team has scored an equal or greater number of runs in two or two and a fraction turns at bat than the visiting team has scored in their three-inning turn.
2. Play has gone beyond three full innings and is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed turn’s at bats. The score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; unless the home team in its half of the incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent’s score, in which case, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.

If a game is suspended because of weather conditions, and later resumed because it does not meet the above requirements, the game will be continued from the point of suspension, with the line-up, batting order and baserunners of each team exactly the same as at the point of suspension.

SIXTEEN AND UNDER RULES

Regulation Game (during regular season and tournament)

1. USSSA rules will govern the length of the game. However, no inning may start after 1 hour 10 minutes has elapsed.
2. A team will be allowed up to a 15-minute delay before the game is forfeited due to a shortage of players.
3. A team will be allowed to start with 8 players. No out will be taken when playing with 8 players.
4. A regulation game is:
 - a. A game played a minimum of 1 hour and 10 minutes; or
 - b. A minimum of 3 innings; or has met the margin of run rules as stated in the USSSA rulebook (8 runs after 5 innings). If a game is tied after the 1 hour and 20 minute rule or is tied after completing the allowable innings, then the USSSA tiebreaker rule will be in effect.
5. If you do not have enough players to play, you will forfeit. However, if both coaches agree, the game may be played for "practice".
6. Your forfeit will be recorded as a loss (7-0 for tournament seeding purposes)

Fielding

1. USSSA rules will be followed.

Pitching

1. The front of the pitching rubber to the back of home plate will be 43 feet.
2. Coaches are reminded of the 16-foot pitcher's circle as stated in the USSSA rulebook.

Batting

1. All players will be in the batting order.
2. Each team is limited to five runs or three outs in an inning, whichever happens first.
3. All other USSSA rules will be followed.

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2. Play has gone beyond three full innings and is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed turn's at bats. The score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; unless the home team in its half of the incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, in which case, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.

If a game is suspended because of weather conditions, and later resumed because it does not meet the above requirements, the game will be continued from the point of suspension, with the lineup, batting order and baserunners of each team exactly the same as at the point of suspension.