

Greater Essex Travel Softball League

Spring/Fall 2021

grsoftballleague@gmail.com

The Greater Essex Travel Softball League will utilize all ASA Rules with the following exceptions:

Age Eligibility

10U – Must be born on or after 1/1/10

12U – Must be born on or between 9/1/07 – 12/31/09

Teams and Affiliations

All teams must originate from a specific township or regional school district. The term “Town” in these rules refers to any specific town, or regional school district, where players reside. Teams are to be sponsored by their town, school district, or local athletic association, and provide proof of insurance from the sponsoring entity.

Club teams are not accepted as participants in the Greater Essex Travel Softball League.

Rosters

Teams must submit a roster which includes players’ name, number, address, school, grade and birthdate. Rules for team rosters:

- A maximum of 15 players can be on the roster.
- If a single program is registering teams for multiple age groups, players rostered on younger age group teams may play up during the regular season and do not need to be listed on both rosters.
- If a single program is registering multiple teams in one age group, at least one team must be registered as an ‘A’ team.
- Players on a ‘B’ team roster may play on the ‘A’ team, but not vice versa.
- A player cannot be on 2 different rosters.
- A team may have a maximum of 3 exempted players (out-of-Town player or a 12U player with Fall 2006 birthdates) under the following criteria:
 - Inclusion of exempted players on a team will require registration of the team in the ‘A’ division
 - Exempted players should not be concurrently playing on a club softball team
 - For 12U players with fall 2007 birthdates (September 1 – December 31, 2007)
 - Players cannot be exempted on both the out-of-Town or birthdate criteria (e.g. an out-of-Town player with a fall 2007 birthdate would not be permitted).

Field Setup

- **Bases** – The distance between bases will be 60'
- **Pitching Distance (10U)** – 35'
- **Pitching Distance (12U)** – 40'

Defense

- **10U Players** - 10 players in the field, free substitution, reentry rule not in affect, substitutions need not be announced. Only 6 players are allowed to be positioned in the infield at the start of the play. When playing on a field with larger than 60' base paths, the infield extends 10 feet beyond the bases.
- **12U Players** - 9 players in the field. Free substitution, reentry and substitutions announcements dependent of batting option (see "Batting/Optional Cinderella 12U).
- **Infield Fly and Dropped 3rd Strike (10U)** – No infield fly rule and no dropped third strike.
- **Infield Fly and Dropped 3rd Strike (12U)** – Infield fly rule and dropped third strike are in affect.

Pitching

- **Re-Entry** – Pitchers can also re-enter the mound freely as long as they remain in the lineup.
 - i.e. One pitcher can pitch innings 1 & 4, while another pitcher pitches innings 2 & 5, and the third pitcher pitches innings 3 & 6).
 - Pitchers are only allowed to return to mound once per inning.
- **Inning Limit** – The league will not mandate, nor police inning limitations for pitchers. It is the coach's responsibility to make sure his/her pitchers are not overworked and that the pitching staff is being adequately developed.
- **Pitching Rules** – Windmill is allowed, Babe Ruth rules apply. Pitchers may start with both feet on the rubber and begin their motion with a step back. Or pitchers may start with their pivot foot on the rubber and their stride foot behind the rubber with no step back in the wind up.
- **Intentional Walks** – No intentional walks without pitching to the batter.
- **Hit Batsman** – A pitcher must be replaced if she hits three batters in an inning, or four batters in a game. Balls that bounce off the ground prior to hitting a batter are generally not counted toward the total unless the coaches agree prior to the game to count them.

Batting

- **Cinderella Batting (10U)** – All players in attendance bat. The additional players are treated as Extra Players (EP) and can freely substitute into the field. If a player must leave or is injured, the player is skipped in the batting order without an automatic out being counted. If a player arrives late, she is added to the bottom of the batting order as an additional EP.
- **Optional Cinderella (12U)** – Teams have the option to bat Cinderella or use normal substitution rules. The choice must be communicated to the opposing coach prior to the start of the game and cannot be changed once the game starts. If batting Cinderella, all players in attendance bat. The additional players will be treated as EPs and can freely substitute into the field. If a player must leave or is injured, the player

is skipped in the batting order without an automatic out being counted. If a player arrives late, she is added to the bottom of the batting order as an additional EP. If using normal substitution rules, starters may return to the game one time after being removed from the game and substitutes may not return to the game after being removed. If a player is injured and no substitute players are eligible to return to the game, the opposing coach may select the bench player to re-enter. If one of the players in the lineup gets injured or must leave early, a bench player must be substituted into the game or an automatic out will be recorded when the players spot is reached in the batting order.

- **Fake Bunting (10U, 12U)** - Fake Bunting and then swinging away (slash) is not allowed at any level.
- **Batting out of order:** Batting out of order will result in that batter being out and any runners in the field must return to their previous base if there was an advance during that out of order batter.
- **Inning End (10U, 12UB)** – There is a ten batter limit per inning. The inning will end after three outs are recorded or after ten batters come to the plate, whichever comes first. The tenth batter will be announced and will bat as normal. The ensuing play will be treated as if there were two outs. This applies to all innings including the last inning.

Base Running

- **Leading (10U, 12U)** – Runners may lead on the pitcher's release. The runner shall be called out if she leaves the base early. There will be one warning per team, per game.
- **Stealing (10UB)** – Runners may steal third base only and cannot advance on an overthrow, even if the ball goes out of play. Runners cannot steal home.
- **Stealing (10UA)** – Runners may steal second base, third base or home. Runners may advance one base only (at their risk) on an over throw from the catcher on a steal attempt, even if the ball goes into Dead Ball Territory.
- **Pick-off (10UB)** – Runners on first or third base cannot advance on a pickoff attempt from the catcher, even if the ball goes out of play or if the pitcher misses the throw back from the catcher.
- **Pick-off (10UA)** – Runners on first or third base may advance one base only (at their risk) on a pickoff attempt from the catcher or if the pitcher misses the throw back from the catcher.
- **Stealing (12U)** – Stealing is allowed and is unrestricted.
- **Courtesy Runners (10U, 12U)** – A courtesy runner may be used for the pitcher or catcher at any time. If the team is using Cinderella batting for all players in attendance, the last batter to make an out must be used as the runner. If a team is following normal substitution rules, a player that is not currently in the game must be used. No player may be used as a courtesy runner more than once in an inning.
- **End of Play (10U, 12U)** – The look back rule is in affect once the ball is secured in the pitching circle. If a runner is standing on a base once the ball is secured in the pitching circle, she must not leave the base or will be called out. If the runner is between bases she is allowed one stop and then must immediately decide whether to return to the previous bag or continue on to the next bag. Dancing between bases once the ball is secured in the circle will result in the runner being called out. If the pitcher leaves the circle, fakes a throw, or throws the ball in an attempt to make a play on the runner, the ball is again live and the runner's actions are unrestricted.
- **Continuance (10UA, 12U)** – If a batter is awarded a base on balls or advances to first base on a dropped third strike, she may continue to second base even if the ball is secured in the circle. However, if the ball is in the circle, the runner must continue to second base without stopping. If she stops after touching first base without a play being made on her, she will be called out. A fake throw constitutes a play.
- **Sliding (10U, 12U)** – Where there is the chance of a 'play at the plate', runners are required to slide to avoid collisions with the catcher. A 'play at the plate' is determined solely by the umpire. No head first sliding, except when diving back to a base.

Game Length

- **Innings** - Game length will be 6 innings. Mercy at 12 runs after 4 innings and 10 runs after 5 innings. (3 ½ and 4 ½ innings if home team is leading) unless both coaches agree to continue until time limit, umpires are required to stay if it is agreed to extend the game. No win is guaranteed if the game is extended.
- **Time** - The goal is to keep the game length to 2 hours. No new inning, beyond the 4th inning should start after 1 hour and 45 minutes. Games are considered official, if 4 full innings have been played (3 ½ innings if home team is leading). A new inning officially begins as soon as the third out is recorded in the previous inning. Please choose an official time keeper (usually the umpire) prior to the game. Once an inning is started, it should be completed, even if it exceeds the two hour guideline. Regular season games can end in a tie, playoff games must go to completion.
- **Forfeit** - Unless sufficient notice is given (minimum 24 hours), a team must be able to field 8 eligible players by game time. There will be a 20 minute grace period. If a team does not have enough players after 20 minutes, that team forfeits. The teams may then choose to play a scrimmage.
- **Thunder & Lightning** – The game should be stopped immediately if any lightning or thunder is present. The umpire should stop the game for 30 minutes from the last occurrence.
- **Weather or darkness** – If a game needs to be stopped due to bad weather or darkness prior to 4 full innings have been played (3 ½ innings if home team is leading), it should be considered complete once it is official. Games are considered official if 4 full innings have been played (3 ½ innings if home team is leading). If a regular season game gets stopped prior to becoming official, it must be started from the same inning (replaying that inning in its entirety) at a later date. Playoff games must be completed from the point (mid-inning) where they left off. If teams are scheduled to play an additional game later in the season, the suspended game should be completed immediately prior to the full game being started. Suspended games should resume from the same point in the line-up. Players no longer in the line-up should be removed, while any new players should bat after all returning players have batted. If a suspended game cannot be completed prior to the last Regular Season date, then it will be considered to be a tie in the standings.

Miscellaneous

- **Backstop** – Coaches are responsible for keeping the backstop clear of spectators and players.
- **Sportsmanship** – All players will shake hands after the game.

Game Results

- Both teams must email game results to grsoftballleague@gmail.com within 24 hours of the game.
- Please include the winning and losing team names, originally scheduled game date and the score.
- Game results and standings will be posted on the Greater Essex Travel Softball website and kept for playoff seeding.
- Teams will be awarded 3 points for a win, 2 points for a tie, and 1 point for a loss. Teams forfeiting a game will be awarded 0 points. Teams winning by forfeit will be awarded 3 points.
- Playoff seeding will be based on points earned. The tie breaker will be head to head competition, winning percentage of games played, and then coin flip. Runs scored or allowed will not be considered for seeding.

Schedules

The league will have a flexible schedule system. We will provide a guideline, by week of when each team should play each team. It's up to the coaches to confirm dates/times with other teams when you know your Town's field availability. The league will schedule season games with a goal of 50% home and 50% away games. It is up to the home team to schedule fields and umpires. The home team is also responsible to reschedule makeup games directly with their opponent. If either team cannot make a scheduled game, they must notify the opposing coach with a phone call at least 24 hours prior to the start of the game. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit.

Make-Up Game Procedure

The home team must contact the visiting team to find a mutually agreeable makeup date. The home team must provide the field and umpire. If the home team does not have field availability, the visiting team may host the game.

Game Balls

Each team will provide one game ball for both home and away games.

Umpires

The home team must secure the umpire for regular season games and initial rounds of the playoffs. The umpire fee is typically \$50-\$60. Due to blackout dates and field availability, teams may not have an equal number of home and away games. Therefore, the home team must pay the umpire half the fee and the visiting team must pay the other half of the fee for each game.

Please make sure the umpires hired for your home games receive a copy of the rules in advance and know what age group they will be working with.

Please do not argue with the umpires over judgment calls. If you believe a rule has been interpreted incorrectly, please call time out and have a conference with the umpire and the opposing coach to review the rule.

Once reviewed, the umpire has the authority to reverse the call or let it stand. As with the judgment call, the umpire's decision is final.

If you believe a rule has been interpreted incorrectly, please contact the league board at grsoftballleague@gmail.com to review the situation and clarification for future games. If there was a misinterpretation, a communication will be sent out to all coaches indicating the situation and the correct interpretation.

End of Season Playoffs

There will be an end of playoffs for each division.

- All teams make the playoffs.
- Minimum 7 games must be played to make the playoffs.
- Trophies and or Championship Shirts will be awarded for 1st and 2nd place teams.
- If a 'B' team mercies 75% of their games in the regular season, they will be placed in the 'A' division (if available) playoffs as the lowest seed.
- Playoff games cannot end in a tie. If a game needs to be stopped due to bad weather or darkness, it should be considered complete if official (4 full innings have been played, 3 ½ innings if home team is leading). If the game gets stopped prior to becoming official, it must be completed at a later date from the point at which it ended. If the game ends in a tie after the regulation number of innings, the international tie breaker will be used in the subsequent innings until the tie is broken. A runner starts on second base for each extra inning. The runner selected must be the last batted out from the previous inning.
- The higher seed will host preliminary playoff rounds and the cost of umpires and balls are covered by both teams.
- The Championship games may be held at either the higher seed or in Glen Ridge/Montclair, with the league covering the umpire/ball costs.
- The Championship games will not have a time limit.

Documentation Requirements

- Each team must provide a completed Team Registration form (coaches contact information and team rosters), and a copy of their insurance certificate to the league prior to the coaches meeting.
- Birth Certificates or official age verification cards must be in the coach's possession during the games.
- Team rosters will be available for each team.
- Teams exceeding limits on the exempted players without prior approval by the league may be removed from the league.