



# 2026 Playing Rules

SOUTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA SOFTBALL, INC.

# **2026 RULES AND REGULATIONS**

(Revised January 31, 2026)

## **SECTION 1 - GENERAL REGULATIONS**

### **A) SANCTIONING BODY RULES**

- i)** The appropriate rules of the sanctioning body approved by the Board of Directors of South Central Pennsylvania Softball, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as "SCPAS") shall govern all play in all seasons and league's offered by SCPAS
- ii)** EXCEPTION-the sanctioning body rules as described above are modified by these rules
- iii)** All interpretations of these rules, as well as the sanctioning body rules as it relates to any play sponsored by SCPAS, are hereby reserved to SCPAS
- iv)** All decisions by SCPAS in regards to the interpretation of these rules are final and are not subject to appeal
- v)** In the event of a conflict between these rules as contained herein and the sanctioning body rules, these rules shall apply

### **B) FEES, PENALTIES AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS**

- i)** SCPAS shall determine all team registration fees, penalties, and other fees and assessments, as necessary
- ii)** In order to be eligible to select a schedule at the league and/or season scheduling meeting all team registration fees must be paid to SCPAS on or before a date that is to be determined by SCPAS
- iii)** All other fees, penalties and/or fines assessed to any team playing within any league and/or season offered by SCPAS, shall be paid to SCPAS within 30 days of the event that led to the incurring of the fee, penalty, or other fee and assessment (except protest fees as further described within these rules)
- iv)** Failure to pay any fee, penalty, and/or fine assessed to any team playing within any league and/or season offered by SCPAS in the specified time will result in a forfeit loss of all games played until the fee, penalty, and/or other assessment is paid

## C) YOUTH GIRLS FAST PITCH SOFTBALL LEAGUES

- i) SCPAS will offer two leagues for youth girls fast pitch softball each calendar year, as follows:
  - a. A summer league whose season commences in May and ends in July
  - b. A fall league whose season commences in September and ends in October
  - c. SCPAS shall establish an appropriate date, time and location for the scheduling meeting for each league and will make the proper notification to all registered teams as early as possible.
  - d. All teams wanting to play in any season and/or league offered by SCPAS shall make application to SCPAS and be subject to the approval of SCPAS.
  - e. SCPAS will make a good faith attempt to have all teams playing in either summer or fall league play an equal number of games both home and away, however this is not guaranteed.

### SECTION 2 - COMPETITION

#### A) AGE AND DIVISIONS OF COMPETITION

- i) In the summer league for girl's youth fast pitch softball, SCPAS will generally offer the following divisions of competition within the following age groups; however, based upon team registration numbers, SCPAS in its sole discretion may combine or in any way modify the age and/or divisions of play:
  - a. 18 & under
  - b. 14 & under
  - c. 12 & under -major and minor divisions
  - d. 10 & under -major, minor upper and minor lower divisions<sup>i</sup>
  - e. SCPAS will offer a 7 & under micro division developmental program for 4-7 year olds
- ii) All teams shall select their age and division upon their team registration, except USA/USSSA registered teams.
  - a. **NEW RULE:** All USA/USSSA registered teams shall play up one age division. For example: 10U travel team will register 12U Major with SCPAS. 12U travel team will register 14U. 14U travel team will register 18U.
- iii) In the fall league for girl's youth fast pitch softball, SCPAS will generally offer one division in 18U and 14U. The 12U & 10U age groups may have more than one division, solely determined by SCPAS.

## **B) POST AND PRE-SEASON PLAY FOR SUMMER SEASON**

- i)** All age groups except the 7U developmental group will have a championship playoff at the end of league play
- ii)** In age groups that have a minor division of play, only those teams registered in the major division are eligible for post season play
- iii)** The dates, times, and locations for all pre-season and post-season play shall be determined by SCPAS
- iv)** SCPAS will offer a pre-season, scrimmage exhibition, exclusively for all minor division teams in all age groups, that wish to participate, at the beginning of the season

## **C) SCPAS YOUTH GIRLS FASTPITCH SUMMER LEAGUE**

- i)** In all ages and divisions, except minor division teams and teams in the 7U developmental division, the summer league shall play 12 games, and the season shall specifically begin and end on dates determined by SCPAS
- ii)** For all registered minor teams, the summer league shall play 12 games, and the season shall specifically begin and end on dates determined by the SCPAS
- iii)** In the 7U age group, all teams will be scheduled for 10 games, and the season shall specifically begin and end on dates determined by the SCPAS
- iv)** In the summer league, all scheduled games in all divisions except the 7U developmental age, must be played.
- v)** In the summer league, if any playoff eligible team accumulates 3 or more losses due to forfeit during the season, the SCPAS shall declare that team ineligible for any post season championship playoff play
- vi)** SCPAS reserves the right to impose any additional penalties on a team that does not play all of its games in the summer season
- vii)** All games scheduled on a weeknight (M-F) shall begin at 6:30 pm unless previously approved by SCPAS.
- viii)** Weekend game start times can be flexible

## **D) SCPAS YOUTH GIRLS FASTPITCH FALL BALL LEAGUE**

- i)** In the SCPAS Girls Youth Fast Pitch fall ball league, all registered teams with the exception of the 10U minor division teams (if offered), shall play 6 games, and the season shall specifically begin and end on dates determined by SCPAS
- ii)** In the SCPAS fall ball season, there is not a 7 U age division.
- iii)** In the SCPAS Girls Youth Fast Pitch fall ball league, all registered 10U minor division teams, if offered, shall play 6 games, and the season shall specifically begin and end on the dates determined by SCPAS
- iv)** All games will be scheduled as single 2-hour weekend games determined by the teams at an announced scheduling meeting for all coaches
- v)** Games within the 10 U minor division shall play a single game of 1 hour and 45 minutes in length
- vi)** Rained out games will not be made up unless agreed to be rescheduled by both team's head coaches
- vii)** Forfeited games cannot be rescheduled
- viii)** No game scores will be reported to SCPAS and division standings will not be recorded
- ix)** No playoffs will be held at the end of the fall season. However, a weekend tournament may be scheduled if at least four teams are interested
- x)** No uniform rules will be in effect. However, umpires will have the authority to use judgment concerning jewelry that is determined to be dangerous to participants and the improper wearing of a uniform.

### **SECTION 3 - PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

#### **A) AGE CUTOFF**

- i)** A player may not be older than the age group she is in as of August 31st of that playing season

#### **B) TEAM ROSTERS**

- i)** All team rosters are determined by each team
  - a.** NEW RULE: All major teams must have at least 9 players on the roster by the due date determined by SCPAS
- ii)** All teams must have all players appear on that team's roster and that team must have their roster submitted to SCPAS by the start of the playing season. Failure to submit a team roster will cause that team to receive forfeit losses for each game played until the roster is received by SCPAS
- iii)** A player may register and appear on the official team roster, of only one team playing in any respective league and/or season<sup>iii</sup>
- iv)** Transfer of a player from one team to another team playing in the respective league and/or season after either team has submitted their roster to SCPAS, must be submitted in writing to the secretary of SCPAS

- v) No player may be transferred from one team to another team playing within the respective league and/or season after either team has played its first game, without the express written approval of SCPAS
- vi) Teams eligible for the playoffs must have their playoff roster finalized and submitted to SCPAS on a date that is determined by SCPAS

**C) PLAYER FLOATING AMONG ORGANIZATIONS WITH MULTIPLE TEAMS**

- i) The floating of players is defined as the borrowing of one team's players to support another team when that team is short of players. Both teams must be within the same umbrella organization. Such floating shall only occur as the players skill warrants and with the advice and consent of the parent/guardian.
- ii) At no time shall a player be permitted to float from a team within one organization with a team(s) playing in the respective league and/or season to another team under a different organization with a team(s) playing in the same league and/or season
- iii) Players may float to other teams within the same organization an unlimited number of times, however with the following restrictions:
  - a. Floating players down from a higher division to a lower division will not be allowed at any time
  - b. Floating players down from an older age group to a younger age group will not be allowed at any time
  - c. If an organization has more than one playoff eligible team in the same age group, players who float may only play in the playoffs for one or the other playoff eligible team

## **SECTION 4 - UMPIRES**

### **A) PROVIDING UMPIRES**

- i)** Except as otherwise stated in these rules, SCPAS will provide certified umpires from the approved sanctioning body.
- ii)** Compensation of the umpires is a function of the SCPAS Administration, therefore no cash payment to the umpires by the teams is allowed
- iii)** All games played within any respective league and/or season must use certified official(s) from the approved sanctioning body, or a qualified person designated by the Executive Board of SCPAS
- iv)** In the event that no approved official is available for the game, the game must be rescheduled by SCPAS without penalty to either team
- v)** All 7U Micro Division teams will not use umpires. Teams may use no more than three (3) on-field coaches to direct players and control the game

## **SECTION 5 - UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT**

### **A) GAME BALLS**

- i)** SCPAS shall provide all teams with a full season of approved game balls that are marked with a stamp of the approved sanctioning body, or that may contain the stamp of a different national sanctioning organization, as long as the ball is equivalent as described herein.
- ii)** The approved game ball may have additional markings which are approved by SCPAS
- iii)** The home team will supply the game balls for the game
- iv)** 12 and under and older age groups shall use a 12 inch yellow optic cover, .47 COR, 375 max compression
- v)** 10U age groups shall use an 11 inch yellow optic cover, .47 COR, 375 max compression
- vi)** 7U Micro shall use a 11" soft touch safety ball
- vii)** SCPAS may authorize a different color game ball for special purposes

## **B) BATS**

- i)** All bats must be stamped with ASA 2000 or 2004 approved certification mark will be allowed in League play as long as they meet all other legal ASA specifications.
- ii)** Legal bats shall be marked by the manufacturer with the words "OFFICIAL SOFTBALL" that are legible
- iii)** Bats that are marked with the words "LITTLE LEAGUE" and "T- BALL" are not legal softball bats and may not be used in any play.
  - a.** EXCEPTION -T Ball bats may be used in the 7U Division

## **C) FIELD EQUIPMENT**

- i)** Use of a double base at first base is optional and not required if the field is not equipped for the installation of a double base
- ii)** Pitching distances for all play shall be in accordance with sanctioning body rules, unless otherwise addressed in these rules

## **D) OTHER**

- i)** All other uniform and equipment regulations are per the sanctioning body rules and apply for the summer league and/or season

### **SECTION 6 - GAME RULES**

#### **A) PRE-GAME RULES**

- i)** Each team will furnish a scorekeeper who will record each player's first and last name, uniform number, and fielding position in scorebook or Game Changer. A lineup card is required to be given to the plate umpire at the pre-game meeting prior to the start of all 10U Major, 12U Major, 14U, and 18U teams
- ii)** In the event that there is a discrepancy between the home team score book and the away team score book, the home team score book will be considered the official book
- iii)** The home team shall grant the field to the visiting team 20 minutes before the start of the game for warm-ups
- iv)** Both team coaches shall meet with the umpires 5 minutes prior to the start of the game to go over introductions, exchange lineup cards, review ground rules, and clarify any questions concerning game rules

#### **B) GENERAL GAME RULES**

- i)** The home team coach will determine if a game is to be cancelled due to inclement weather or unplayable field conditions. Should the umpires show up at the field, then the fitness of the ground necessary to start the game will be

- decided solely by the plate umpire
- ii)** The game length for the major divisions in the 12, 14 and 18 age groups shall be 1 hour and 40 minutes, finish the inning. Time shall begin immediately upon conclusion of the pre-game plate meeting.
  - iii)** The game length for the 10 U major and all minor division in all age groups shall be 1 hour and 30 minutes, finish the inning. Time shall begin immediately upon conclusion of the pre-game plate meeting.
  - iv)** At the first sight of lightning, no matter how far away from the field, the plate umpire, in his sole judgment, is required to suspend the game immediately and request that all players leave the field
  - v)** After the game begins, the plate umpire will be the sole determiner of darkness, inclement weather, or poor field conditions suitable for the game to be suspended or declare it a regulation game if at least 4 innings are completed, or 3 ½ innings if the home team is winning
  - vi)** Should bad weather or field conditions improve after a brief period of time, the plate umpire may resume the game at the point of pitch
  - vii)** All time limits shall not include time while the game is suspended for inclement weather conditions
  - viii)** Major division games may only end in a tie, if the game is unable to be completed because of darkness, weather conditions, or other field conditions
  - ix)** If the game is tied at the end of the regulation game (either by 7 innings or the expiration of the time limit) the ITB shall be utilized until the game has a winner or is unable to be completed because of darkness, weather conditions, or other field conditions.
  - x)** Minor division games will end after 7 regulation innings or 1-1/2 hour time limit, regardless of the score (there is no tie breaker)
  - xi)** If a game gets rained out before completing 3 ½ innings, the game will start over at the rescheduled time

- xii)** The home team coach is responsible for calling game cancellations to the visiting team coach. A scheduled game may not be canceled for reasons other than rainouts or field conditions. If EXTREME circumstances arise, SCPAS may decide to allow the cancellation and subsequent rescheduling of a game
- xiii)** Any team at the playing field ready to play will be awarded a forfeit win if the other team does not show by the scheduled game time with enough players. Both teams will be allowed a five (5) minute grace period
- xiv)** Rained out, or otherwise postponed games must be played before the last day of the regular season. Both coaches of the affected teams shall confer and agree on a suitable make-up date and SCPAS shall be notified of the suitable date, within 5 calendar days of the original rained out or postponed game. Failure to advise SCPAS of a suitable date for the game within the 5 day period will result in a forfeit issued by SCPAS to both teams. However, if one team can demonstrate to SCPAS that the other team has been non-responsive in attempting to reschedule, the forfeit for that team may be reversed by SCPAS. This action will be final, not reversed, and not subject to appeal
- xv)** Coaches, players, substitutes, attendants, umpires or other bench personnel shall not use alcohol, tobacco, or vaping products in any form. Penalty: The umpire shall issue a warning to the coach of the team involved and the next offender on that team shall be ejected
- xvi)** Major division teams may list 9, 10, or 11 batters in their batting lineup to start the game. Up to two additional batters in the starting lineup may be listed as an Extra Player (EP). The Extra Players may be inserted anywhere in the lineup batting order **RULE ALLOWS THE FOLLOWING:**
  - ❖ **Bat 9 and make the use of the DP/FLEX (Optional)**
  - ❖ **Bat all players and make the use of DP/Flex (Optional)**
  - ❖ **Team can bat everyone in the line up. (Optional)**
- xvii)** Major teams shall not be prohibited from using the DP/FLEX rule, regardless of how many batters are in the lineup.
- xviii)** Teams must use the same number of batters that they started the game with for the entire game
- xix)** All players in the batting order may be interchanged in the field at any time without using up a substitution

- xx)** If a team bats all their players and incurs an injury to one of the players, to compress their lineup by the number of injured players, without any penalty. Players may not re-enter the game once they leave due to their injury
- xxi)** Substitutions and re-entries will apply per the sanctioning body rules
- xxii)** Minor division teams must use a continuous batting order of all players, with free defensive substitutions
- xxiii)** In all minor divisions if either team is ahead by eight (8) runs after five (5) complete innings, or is ahead by twelve (12) runs after four (4) complete innings, the game will be considered a complete game. The approved sanctioning body "run ahead" rules apply for the major division
- xxiv)** SCPAS will follow the appropriate sanctioning body rules including the current PIAA pitching rule unless otherwise stated in these rules<sup>iv</sup>
- xxv)** Throwing of equipment will not be tolerated:
  - a.** First offense a warning will be given to both the player and the coach
  - b.** Second offense the player is removed from the game and is considered disqualified, not ejected. A new player assumes her position on the field, or bases, or ball-strike count if batting
  - c.** This rule applies to any throwing of any equipment by an offensive or defensive player, or coach
  - d.** If, in the judgment of the umpire, an infraction under this section is so egregious, he may immediately eject the player, without any warning
- xxvi)** An eligible roster player may be added to the substitute list at any time during the game
- xxvii)** Teams can use any rostered player to run for the pitcher or catcher

**C) POST-GAME RULES**

- i)** Following the completion of every game, all players and coaches will form a line to thank the opposing team members for a good game. Failure to do so will be considered a form of unsportsmanlike conduct subject to penalties under the approved Zero Tolerance Policy

The home team must report the score to SCPAS upon completion of the game. A game score that is not reported by the home team within 48 hours after the completion of the game will result in a forfeit for the home team. This action will not be reversed and is not subject to appeal. In the event of a discrepancy between the teams over the score of the game, the home team scorebook will be used. All protests must follow all rules listed under the PROTEST PROCEDURES

**SECTION 7 - PROTEST PROCEDURES**

**A) PROTEST SITUATIONS**

- i)** Umpire judgment calls, i.e. fair/foul, safe/out, ball/strike, etc., are not subject to

protest

- ii)** If you believe that an umpire has made a call based on the misinterpretation of a playing rule or you believe an ineligible player is in the game
  - a.** Protesting coach must notify the plate umpire and the opposing coach at the time of the infraction that you are playing the game under protest and state the nature of the protest. The plate umpire will have the opportunity to change the call should a proper ruling interpretation be determined. In any case, the game will continue
  - b.** In the event of a protest of an ineligible player, the protest must be made before the end of the game and the home plate umpire has left the field of play. The umpire will render no judgment on the alleged illegal player, and if the protest under this section is during the game, the game is to continue
- iii)** The protesting coach has 24 hours to notify the President of SCPAS of the protest, in the following manner:
  - a.** The protesting coach must file the protest on the appropriate electronic form which is accessible on the SCPAS website. Such submission shall be made within 24 hours of the end of the game that led to the protest
  - b.** Within 5 days of the game that led to the protest, the protesting coach must submit to SCPAS, a check in the amount of \$50.00
  - c.** Failure to comply with any of the above protest procedures will void any protest considerations
- iv)** Additionally, if the protest is over an ineligible player, in addition to the protest fee and the electronic form as described above, the protesting coach must submit the following:
  - a.** Copies of the game from the scorebook that the alleged ineligible player participated in, and the opposing team's line- up card
  - b.** Failure to provide scorebook and line-up card copies having proper first and last names of the players listed, will void any protest considerations
- v)** Failure to submit the required information and/or protest fee in the appropriate time, will cause the President of SCPAS to immediately declare a procedural defect in the protest and the protest will be rejected

## **B) PROTEST REVIEW PROCEDURES**

- i)** The Executive Board of SCPAS shall be the sole determiner of all protests
- ii)** Protests will be settled as soon as possible and prior to the end of the season.
- iii)** The Executive Board shall hold a protest hearing with the protesting coach, opposing coach, and the umpire involved
  - a.** Each coach and umpire will be heard at the protest
  - b.** All coaches and umpires will leave the room while the Board reviews the protest

- c. If the protesting coach fails to show up at the designated time, the protest will be invalid
- d. If the opposing coach or the umpire fails to appear before the Executive Board, the protest will be reviewed and decided upon without their comments
- iv) All decisions by the Executive Board will be final. No explanations or reason for their decision will be necessary
- v) If any protest is determined to be invalid, the final game score stands and no further action shall be required
- vi) If a protest for misinterpretation of a playing rule or illegal player is upheld, the game will be resumed at the point of protest with the ruling corrected
- vii) If an ineligible player protest is upheld, the offending team will forfeit all games won that the ineligible player participated in during the season
- viii) If a protest is upheld by the Executive Board, the \$50 protest fee shall be refunded to the protesting team
- ix) If the protest is rejected, the protesting team shall forfeit the \$50 protest fee

**SECTION 8 - DIVISION RULES REFERENCE**

**A) 12U, 14U, 18U MAJOR DIVISION**

- i) Official game: 7 innings or at least 4 innings are completed (3 ½ innings if the home team is winning) and game cannot be continued due to darkness, inclement weather, or poor field conditions. If the game is stopped for any of these reasons, and the score is tied, the game will be completed and may end in a tie
- ii) If the game is tied at the end of the regulation game (either by 7 innings or the expiration of the time limit) the ITB shall be utilized until one of the conditions specified herein.
- iii) One hour and 40 minute time limit -finish the inning
- iv) The PIAA pitching rule is allowed
- v) Teams may list 9, 10, or 11 batters in the starting lineup
- vi) 5 run limit per inning throughout duration of game  
If the game is tied at the end of the time limit, each team would get one complete half inning of offense. If the teams are tied after one complete at bat, the game ends in a tie.

**B) 12U MINOR DIVISION**

- i) Official game: 7 innings or at least 4 innings are completed (3 ½ innings if the home team is winning) and game cannot be continued due to darkness, inclement weather, or poor field conditions. If the game is stopped for any of these reasons,

and the score is tied, the game will be completed and may end in a tie

- ii) 1 hour and 30 minute time limit -finish the inning
- iii) 5 run limit per inning
- iv) The PIAA pitching rule is allowed
- v) Teams must use a continuous batting order of all players and free substitutions are allowed on defense
- vi) The pitching distance for this division shall be 40 feet.
- vii) **UPDATED RULE:** The dropped third strike shall be played in this division.
- viii) The infield fly rule is being played in the division

C) 10U MAJOR DIVISION

- i) Official game: 7 innings or at least 4 innings are completed (3 ½ innings if the home team is winning) and game cannot be continued due to darkness, inclement weather, or poor field conditions. If the game is stopped for any of these reasons, and the score is tied, the game will be completed and may end in a tie
- ii) If the game is tied at the end of the regulation game (either by 7 innings or the expiration of the time limit) the ITB shall be utilized until one of the conditions specified herein.
- iii) 1 hour and 30 minute time limit - finish the inning
- iv) 5 run limit per inning throughout duration of game.
- v) Stealing one base per pitch only allowed. A runner may steal home if any defensive player makes a play at 3rd base
- vi) Batters receiving a base on balls are awarded first base only and may not continue advancing to second base
- vii) No infield fly rule
- viii) No dropped third strike rule
- ix) Teams will use 9 players on defense
- x) The PIAA pitching rule is allowed
- xi) Teams may list 9, 10, or 11 batters in the starting lineup
- xii) Pitching distance is 35 feet

D) 10U MINOR, BOTH UPPER AND LOWER DIVISIONS

- i) Official game: 7 innings or at least 4 innings are completed (3 ½ innings if the home team is winning) and game cannot be continued due to darkness, inclement weather, or poor field conditions. If the game is stopped for any of these reasons, and the score is tied, the game will be completed and may end in a tie.
- ii) 5 run limit per inning
- iii) No stealing
- iv) No infield fly rule
- v) No dropped third strike rule
- vi) One additional player is allowed on defense to make a 10 player team. Only six

defenders, including the pitcher and catcher, will be allowed to be positioned in the infield. All other defensive players are considered outfielders and must be positioned at a minimum distance of 15 feet beyond the base lines

- vii)** Batter is not out for stepping on home plate when making contact with a batted ball
- viii)** Teams must use a continuous batting order of all players and free substitution on defense
- ix)** Coach will enter the game to pitch to his/her batters when:
  - a.** the player's pitch count reaches a count of 3 balls and 0 strikes
  - b.** the count reaches 4 balls
  - c.** the batter is hit by a pitch
  - d.** All batters must hit the ball or strike out. Batters will not advance to first base on a base on balls or hit by a pitch
- x)** Pitcher must be positioned within the pitcher's circle at the time of coach pitch to the batter
- xi)** The PIAA pitching rule is allowed
- xii)** Ball becomes dead when any infielder has control of the ball and makes no play on an offensive base runner
- xiii)** Defensive players will be allowed the opportunity to make a play on any base runner. If they make an attempted play, the ball becomes dead on an overthrow. In either case, base runners must stop at the base that they were attempting to reach
- xiv)** Pitching distance is 35 feet

#### **E) 7U MICRO**

- i)** Official game is a 1 hour and 30 minute time limit or 4 innings, whichever comes first
- ii)** 50 foot base paths
- iii)** All players on the team will bat through a continuous batting order each half inning regardless of how many outs are made. The first batter in the lineup leads off the first inning. Batter #4 leads off the second inning. Batter #7 leads off the third inning. Batter #10 leads off the fourth inning
- iv)** No stealing
- v)** No infield fly rule
- vi)** No dropped third strike rule
- vii)** No more than 10 players allowed on defense
- viii)** Batter is not out for stepping on home plate when making contact with a batted ball
- ix)** Use 11" yellow soft touch Safety ball (Diamond FlexiBall, Easton

- Incrediball, etc.)
- x)** Base runner must hold on base until the ball is hit
  - xi)** Coach of the team at bat pitches to their own batters 30 feet from home plate; coach may move closer to batter if necessary
  - xii)** Each batter gets no more than three swings from coach to hit ball fair; then no more than two swings off of a Tee
  - xiii)** Ball becomes dead when any infielder has control of the ball and makes no play on an offensive base runner
  - xiv)** Defensive players will be allowed the opportunity to make a play on any base runner. If they make an attempted play, the ball becomes dead on an overthrow. In either case, base runners must stop at the base that they were attempting to reach
  - xv)** No more than three offensive coaches allowed on the field; one pitching, one in foul territory on first base side, and one in foul territory on third base side
  - xvi)** No more than three defensive coaches allowed on the field; two in fair territory and one behind the catcher
  - xvii)** On close safe or out plays, base-runners will be assumed safe and allowed to remain on base for experience purposes. Pitcher must be positioned within the pitcher's circle at the time of coach pitch to the batter. Any game rules may be altered by mutual agreement of both coaches prior to the start of a game

## **SECTION 9 - POST SEASON PLAYOFFS**

### **A) MAJOR DIVISION PLAYOFFS**

- i)** Any games not played or scores not reported by the end of the season, will result in a forfeit loss for both teams
- ii)** The championship playoffs for all divisions eligible for post season playoffs will be held on a date(s) to be determined by SCPAS
- iii)** All registered major division teams are eligible for the post season, championship playoff tournament. The tournament shall be a single elimination tournament according to the following schedule:
  - a.** In age groups that have 8 teams or fewer registered in their respective major division, all teams will play in one playoff flight
  - b.** In age groups that have over 8 teams, but 16 or less teams in their respective major division, the playoff tournament will be divided into two playoff flights
  - c.** In age groups that have over 16 teams, but 24 or less teams in their respective major division, the playoff tournament will be divided into three playoff flights
  - d.** In age groups that have over 25 teams, but 32 teams or less in their respective major division, the playoff tournament will be divided into four

playoff flights

- e. Playoff seedings will be determined by utilizing the aggregate points accumulated for the team through the regular season. Points will be awarded according to the following schedule
  - 1. The team winning the game will be awarded 3 points
  - 2. In the event of a tie, each team will be awarded 2 points
  - 3. The losing team of each game will be awarded 1 point
- f. When multiple flights exist for post season play, teams will be assigned to their respective flight based on their respective point accumulation. The number of teams in each flight shall be determined solely by SCPAS. Nothing herein shall be construed to mean that when multiple flights exist, that teams will be divided equally
- g. Playoff tournament play will be conducted according to a calendar that is approved by SCPAS
- h. If one parent organization has 2 teams within the same age and division, and both teams are eligible to play in the playoffs, however a shortage of players prohibit both teams from playing in the playoffs causing 1 team to withdraw their eligibility to play, the remaining team must accept the higher team's seeding position and schedule. The rules governing the floating of players still applies.

## **B) TIES FOR PLAYOFF SEEDINGS**

- i) A tie occurs when 2 or more teams in the same age and division, accumulate the same point value as determined by SCPAS using the criteria contained herein
- ii) In order to determine the proper playoff seeding, the tie between the teams will be resolved using the following parameters
  - a. The head to head record of the teams is used, utilizing the head to head tie breaking protocol on the SCPAS website
  - b. The second criteria is the strength of all opponents utilizing the strength of all opponents' protocol on the SCPAS website.
  - c. The third criteria is a coin toss will be used to determine the seeding position of the remaining tied teams, if any.
  - d. The process to be used in the coin flips will be determined by the SCPAS Executive Board, as necessary, prior to beginning of the coin flip process
- iii) The higher seeded team will be the home team and if the game is played at a neutral site, will have their choice of dugouts for each playoff and championship game unless the other team already occupies the dugout from a recently concluded game
- iv) Times, dates and rain-dates, will be announced at the scheduling meeting
- v) All playoff and championship playing sites will be decided by SCPAS
- vi) The organization hosting the championship games will be in charge of all

preliminary fields lining and set up responsibilities including concessions

**C) OFFICIATING AND RULES**

- i)** SCPAS will provide two certified umpires at each playoff game
- ii)** SCPAS will provide two new leather covered official softballs for each playoff game
- iii)** SCPAS rules supersede sanctioning body playing rules in all post season playoff games

**D) AWARDS**

- i)** All awards will be presented at the conclusion of each playoff game when necessary
- ii)** Awards may be trophies, plaques, medals, or other form of recognition as determined by the SCPAS Board of Directors
- iii)** Team awards will be presented to the first and second-place finishers in each age and division. In divisions that have multiple playoff flights, each flight will have its own first and second place awards
- iv)** Player-of-the-game awards will be presented by each team to a player on the opposing team after each playoff game

**E) MISCELLANEOUS**

- i)** Practices for championship play are unrestricted and may be held at the discretion of each coach at any time, date or field
- ii)** Except as otherwise allowed within this subsection, no player shall appear on the roster of a team eligible to play in the playoffs, unless that player has played in 5 of the teams regular season games, or in the case of an organization with multiple teams playing in the respective league season, 5 games of any team playing for that particular organization
- iii)** No more than four players will be allowed to be floated to participate in a team's playoff games unless that team's pre-season roster had less than six players listed
- iv)** Teams eligible to play in the playoffs must have their team rosters submitted to SCPAS on a date that is determined by SCPAS. The Head Coach of the team must verify, and sign off, as being compliant with the provisions contained herein. Coaches not complying with this requirement will be found in violation of the SCPAS Zero Tolerance Policy and subject to sanctions imposed by SCPAS

**SECTION 10 - FALL SEASON**

**A) TEAMS AND GAMES**

- i)** Teams will have the option of playing in the age group that they played in during the current spring/summer season or that they will play in next year
- ii)** Teams will be open roster as determined by the organization that they

represent

- iii)** If a team cannot provide their own home field playing facilities, their scheduled home games will be played at the opposing team's field or at a neutral field in agreement by both teams
- iv)** One certified sanctioning body umpire will be provided and scheduled by the umpire's association for each fall season game
- v)** Home field coach must call umpire assigner no less than 48 hours in advance of the game to cancel the game for reasons unrelated to weather or field conditions
- vi)** The team scheduled as the home team will supply one official game ball
- vii)** For all teams except 10 U minor, no inning will start after a 2 hour time limit, finish the inning; 1 game
- viii)** For 10 U minor teams, no new inning shall begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes

**B) GAME RULES**

- i)** 5 run limit per inning
- ii)** Teams must use a continuous batting order and free substitution on defense
- iii)** The PIAA pitching rule is allowed
- iv)** The infield fly rule and dropped third strike rule will be used in all age groups except 10-under
- v)** Games that are tied at the end of regulation play (7 innings or 2 hour time limit) will remain tied and end as a tied game
- vi)** Any rules concerning the fall season league as covered in Section 10, will supersede spring/summer season League rules or sanctioning body rules

## LEAGUE ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

In an effort to make girls fast pitch softball a more desirable, enjoyable and rewarding experience for all participants, South Central Pennsylvania Softball has adopted a "Zero Tolerance Policy". This Zero Tolerance Policy is designed to require all coaches, players, umpires, team officials, parents, administrators, and spectators to maintain a sportsmanlike and educational atmosphere before, during, and after all SCPAS sanctioned games. The following actions will result in a warning being issued to the violator

- a. Openly disputing or arguing any judgment decision by an umpire
- b. Taunting or otherwise being disrespectful of players, coaches, umpires, or spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, or encouraging others to be disrespectful or unsportsmanlike
- c. Using alcoholic or tobacco products within the confines of the field complex

The following actions will result in an immediate ejection from a game and a minimum of another one game suspension

- (a) Continuing any of the above violations after receiving a warning
- (b) Using profane or vulgar language at any time or displaying a physical act which is obscene, even if it is not directed at any particular person
- (c) Visually demonstrating any sign of extreme dissatisfaction with an umpire's decision by throwing equipment or any other object
- (d) Causing any inappropriate physical contact including threats of physical violence or causing harm, fighting, or inappropriate contact of a sexual nature

Failure of an ejected game participant or spectator being asked to leave the field complex within one minute of being ejected without further confrontation will result in forfeiture of that game. Any ejected individual will be placed on probation for the remainder of the current season. A second ejection during the current season will result in a one year suspension from all SCPAS related activities.

All violations of the SCPAS Zero Tolerance Policy must be reported to the Executive Board using the incident report found on the SCPAS web site. The on line report must be filed within 24 hours of the incident. The SCPAS Executive Board will make any final decisions regarding additional penalties to enforce depending on the severity of violations to the SCPAS Zero Tolerance Policy.

A violator may decide to appeal any suspension or probationary periods, in which case a meeting will be held with all individuals concerned in attendance. Any decisions by the SCPAS Executive Board will be final.

## LEAGUE CODE OF CONDUCT

All coaches, players, parents, and spectators who attend or participate in our girls softball games are required to follow and honor the articles, rules and regulations established by the organization or club that they represent, South Central Pennsylvania Softball, and the ASA (Amateur Softball Association)

Misconduct and unsportsmanlike behavior, including threats of any nature towards opposing coaches, players, fans, or umpires is unacceptable at any youth sporting event and will NOT be tolerated. All reports of unsportsmanlike conduct received by SCPAS officers will be seriously and immediately dealt with. Any disciplinary action will first be addressed by the organization within SCPAS that the offender represents. Any further disciplinary action that may be determined by the Board of Directors of SCPAS based on the SCPAS Zero-Tolerance Policy, could result in a suspension from attending all SCPAS activities for an amount of time to be set by SCPAS.

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<sup>i</sup> In the 10U minor division's of play, the coach pitches in both divisions. As a matter of guidance, first year 10U players typically play in the 10U minor lower division. Players that may be more experienced, but not yet ready for 10U major, typically play on the 10U upper team.

<sup>iii</sup> This clause is not intended to prohibit a player from playing on a tournament team simply because that tournament team plays within the League. However, it is intended to restrict that player from appearing on the roster of two teams that are playing within the League, thereby playing on two League teams. To avoid this conflict, when playing on both a recreational team and tournament team that plays within the League, the player only appears on the recreational team's roster. The player also appears on the roster that the tournament team submits to tournaments, but doesn't appear on the roster that the tournament team submits to the League. The player plays League ball for the recreational team only and continues to play tournaments with the tournament team.

<sup>iv</sup> The PIAA pitching rule allows the pitcher to start the pitching delivery with the pivot foot on or partially on the top surface of the pitcher's plate and the non-pivot (striding) foot in contact with or behind and off of the pitcher's plate. Once the hands are brought together, the pitcher must step forward towards the batter with the non-pivot (striding) foot. Any step backward with the non-pivot foot shall begin while the hands are separated and before the hands come together.

<sup>v</sup> The teams in the coach pitch divisions have experienced a great deal of confusion regarding a coach entering the game to pitch to the batter. The confusion exists over exactly what the coach may or may not say to the batter and in some cases teams have expressed their displeasure that the coach speaks to the batter at all. Therefore, this clarification is necessary. First, the League has determined that silence from the coach is not appropriate. Secondly, having the coach tell the batter to "swing" or "keep going" isn't really appropriate either.

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However, the League does endorse encouragement from the coach to the player; reminding the batter of the strike zone, etc. So in order to add clarity, the League will say that communicating with the batter prior to him/her pitching the ball is acceptable. The last point regarding the coach pitch is that the coach must be still in the Circle, however not necessarily from the pitching rubber.