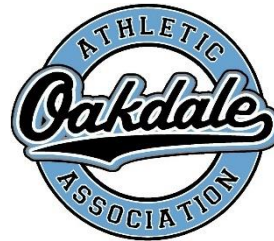


South East Metro League



Rookies 6th/7th Grade

This Rookies (6th and 7th grade) division is a part of the South East Metro League and is a joint venture of CGAA, ERAA, OAA, Como and WAA to promote the ideals of sportsmanship and spirit of competition across the four sporting communities.

The league will be governed by officials from all Associations.

Teams will be comprised of players in 6th and 7th grades.

The league has been created to provide girls playing Rec/In-House softball a positive and fun, yet competitive environment. The teams from the Associations are created in that spirit.

Teams will be created by the following means:

All teams will be assured of having an equitable number of pitchers and catchers.

CGAA, ERAA, OAA, Como and WAA teams will be formed by their respective league director.

Softball Rules – Rookies 6th and 7th Grade

Official USA Softball rules governs all play except as noted in these South East Metro SOFTBALL RULES.

Safety

Injuries

Safe play is the most important consideration. If a player is injured, the play in progress shall be completed and time-out called immediately. Bleeding wounds must be bandaged before the player may re-enter the game. Report serious injuries to the league's commissioner.

Shoes

Players must wear tennis shoes or rubber cleats. No sandals or metal cleats.

Helmets

Batters, all base runners, and the on-deck batter must wear helmets. Teams may need to share helmets during games. All helmets must have a proper fit with a face mask attached. It is highly encouraged that the helmets also have a chin strap and are used by the players.

Fielders Masks

It is **REQUIRED** that all players that play "in the dirt" wear fielders' masks for all Associations under SEML. It is also highly recommended for outfielders but is not required.

Catchers Equipment

At the beginning of each inning, catchers should attempt to be fully equipped and ready to play. This includes wearing all protective gear provided and ensuring that equipment is properly secured.

Thrown Bats

Throwing bats is not allowed. First thrown bat results in a warning. A second thrown bat by the same player at any time during the game results in an out.

Lightning

If lightning is observed by a coach or umpire, the game will be halted for at least 30 minutes from the last observed flash before resuming play.

Umpires

South East Metro League attempts to provide umpires for all In-House games in this division. There may be times when an umpire is unavailable. In the event there is not an umpire, the coaches will select a parent from each team (one for in the field and one for behind the plate). The home team shall provide the home plate umpire. Every attempt shall be made to find an umpire. If one team does not have an umpire, the other team may supply both or proceed with only one.

Coaches

Coaches are not allowed in the outfield with the players. ALL coaches, except the 1st and 3rd base coach must remain behind the fenced area of the field near your players' bench. Coaches or players are not allowed to stand behind the umpire/batting area. Fans behind the umpire must show good sportsmanship and may be asked to move by the umpire if deemed necessary.

Season Rules

Rescheduling Games

Coaches are responsible for coordinating with the league commissioner to reschedule games called for weather or any other reason. All games must be attempted to be rescheduled.

Game Times and Time Limit

Game will start at 6:30 p.m. with no new inning after 8 p.m.. Games will have a drop-dead time of 8:30 p.m. If the home team is at bat as the drop-dead time occurs and they score the winning run prior to the 8:30 p.m. mark, the game is over. IF an inning is not complete at the 8:30 p.m. mark (i.e., the home team is losing and a full inning has not been completed), the game score will revert to the last completed inning.

Games will be a maximum of six (6) innings or until the time limit constraints have been exceeded.

Home Team

The home team is determined by the schedule for all regular season games. Home team will supply the game ball to the umpire, visiting team will supply a backup ball.

It is the responsibility of the coaches to know who is home and away. The schedule on the SEML website will be the source of truth. If the coaches are still not able to agree, the decision will be made at the discretion of the umpire.

During the end of season tournament, the home team will be established via coin flip.

Strikeouts

Standard 3 strike, 4 ball count.

The count starts with the first pitch thrown to the batter. Drop 3rd strike is **not** in effect. If the catcher drops the third strike, the batter is still out.

Substitution

Free defensive substitution and all players bat. Late arriving players must be inserted at the end of the batting order.

Playing Time

During the course of the season coaches must move players throughout the field, both infield and outfield, to provide an opportunity to play as many positions as each player is capable of.

Players are not allowed to play the same position twice in the same game with the exception of the Pitcher and Catcher. No players are allowed to sit on the bench for consecutive innings unless in the case of injury or illness. No player should sit on the bench twice in a game prior to all players sitting on the bench once.

Minimum Players

Teams will be allowed to begin a game with six (6) players, any late arriving players must be inserted at the end of the batting order. A team with less than seven (7) players at the end of the game forfeits.

If a game must be forfeited, the teams may scrimmage sharing players as necessary.

Maximum Players

Nine (9) Players in the field playing in the traditional fast pitch positions – Pitcher, Catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, Shortstop, Left Field, Center Field, and Right Field.

Out of Play

The field of play includes foul territory up to an imaginary line drawn parallel to the foul line from the edge of the backstop. Balls beyond this imaginary line are out of play.

Ball

A 12-inch ball will be used.

Base Distances

The base distance is 60 feet.

Winning and Losing

Each game score needs to be entered on the league NGIN website by either team within two days of the completed game. Tournament seeding is set based upon regular season record.

Sportsmanship

No protests are allowed, and there should be no arguments between coaches. Coaches should meet before the game to review and agree on rules, especially any gray areas. Taunting of the opposition, whether from the field or bench, is strictly prohibited, including hurtful cheers. This applies to coaches and spectators as well. Umpires have the authority to eject coaches, players, or spectators for any unsportsmanlike conduct. Anyone ejected must leave the field area immediately, or their team will be required to forfeit. A second infraction from the same team will result in the head coach also being ejected, and a third infraction will lead to a forfeit by the offending team.

Game Rules

Pitching

1. The pitching rubber shall be placed 40 feet from home plate. Pitchers must pitch using a windmill motion. Proper pitching technique and delivery will be required and enforced. Pitchers must deliver the pitch from the mound.
2. It is incumbent on the coach to teach proper pitching fundamentals. The pitcher must start and release from the pitching rubber.
 - a. At least one foot must be in contact with the pitching rubber before the delivery of the pitch.
 - b. Pitchers, if they choose, are allowed to take a single step to the rear before the delivery of the pitch as per USA Softball and MSHL rules.
3. New pitchers entering the game may throw seven (7) warm up pitches before beginning to pitch. Returning pitchers may throw five (5) warm up pitches.
 - a. If the catcher is not ready to take the field, a coach should be ready to catch the warmup pitches.
4. If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during delivery, a dead ball is called, and runners may not advance.
5. The goal of the Rookie division is to encourage pitcher development. To support this development any illegal pitch is considered a dead pitch. (It is not a ball, and it is not a strike)
6. Each team will use at least two (2) pitchers per game for at least one full inning per pitcher (3 total outs, does not need to be consecutive). If needed due to injury, illness, or umpire discretion, the three (3) outs can be made up by multiple pitchers.
7. If the pitcher hits a batter or batters three (3) times in an inning or seven (7) times in a game, the pitcher shall be removed from the mound.
 - a. A batter hit by a pitch will automatically be awarded first base if they make a reasonable

- attempt to move out of the way.
 - b. If the batter does not make a reasonable attempt to avoid the pitch, the umpire will call a dead ball, add a ball to the count, and the batter will not be awarded first base.
 - c. A ball that bounces before reaching the batter is still live, and the batter must still attempt to move out of the way to be awarded first base.
 - d. The umpire has full discretion in determining whether the batter made a reasonable attempt to avoid the pitch.
- 8. Each team will use at least two (2) catchers per game for at least one full inning per catcher (3 total outs, does not need to be consecutive). If needed due to injury, illness, or umpire discretion, the three (3) outs can be made up by multiple catchers.
 - a. Catchers should be ready to take the field with the rest of the team unless on the base path when the 3rd out is made.

Hitting

1. All teams must bat all players on the team in order (round robin). There shall be no change in the batting rotation during the game.
2. The batter has the responsibility of being ready for a pitch unless they indicate they are not. Batters will not be awarded a base unless they are struck by a pitch, and they must make a reasonable attempt to move out of the way of a pitch, as previously discussed. A batter hit by pitch while swinging the bat does not display a reasonable attempt.
3. The infield fly rule is omitted.
4. Bunting is allowed, only two (2) bunts per inning.
5. If a pitched ball bounces before the plate the ball may be swung at and hit, fouled off or missed the ball is still live.
6. If a player must leave before the end of a game their batting spot is skipped and no out is called.

Base Running

1. The base runner may lead off the base after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
2. Any batter or runner that intentionally loses her helmet shall be declared out. The ball will become dead, and all runners shall go back to the last legally held base.
3. A runner must slide or attempt to avoid contact when a play is being made at the base they are going for, especially at home. The umpire may call a runner out if in their judgement there was no attempt to avoid contact.
4. Stealing is allowed in all cases, with the exception of an overthrown ball from the catcher to the pitcher (exception if the pitcher is covering a base or home plate).
5. The pitcher and catcher (for the subsequent inning) are permitted to have a courtesy base runner by the last out made, to allow them to be ready to start the next inning.
6. Courtesy runners are also allowed in case of injury, the courtesy runner will be the last player to have gotten out.

Fielding

1. Infielders shall play in traditional positions.
2. Infielders may not stand in the baseline and interfere with base runners.
3. Outfielders must start each play on the grass.
4. A caught foul ball by the catcher must go higher than the batters head for it to be an out. A caught 3rd strike is still an out even if the foul does not travel higher than the batters head. If a 3rd strike is "tipped" and caught by the catcher, the batter is out.
5. Overthrows – in the event of an overthrow out of play, the runner is awarded one (1) base beyond the base they were going to at the release of the throw.
6. A play ends when the pitcher is in possession of the ball inside the pitching circle, approximately 8 feet around the pitching rubber.

Scoring

1. Each team may score a **maximum of five (5) runs** per inning or until three (3) outs are made, whichever comes first. Games may end in a tie during the season but not during tournament play.
2. Each team must keep a scorebook for the number of runs scored per inning.

Conduct

1. Any player, parent or coach that is belligerent towards any child, coach or umpire will be warned first by their coach or umpire. If actions continue, the game will be called and the offending team will forfeit the game
 - a. Refer to the Parent/Coaches Code of Conduct that was signed at registration for belligerent acts as well as Sportsmanship section above.

These rules are subject to change by the League Directors only to create clarification and/or to preserve the integrity of the game. Changes will only be made with proper communication to all coaches.

Any proposed rule changes by a coach or parent can only be addressed by them at the Rule Committee meeting. Any rule not covered here or in the general rules shall be covered by the Official USA Softball Fastpitch Rule Book.