

# **West Seneca Girls Softball Association, Inc.**

## **Standing Rules**

### **Article I – Playing Rules**

The WSGSA is subject to all of the rules and regulations as set forth the Amateur Softball Association of America (“ASA”) Official Rules of Softball as such Official Rules relate to Women’s Fast Pitch Softball. The following rules and regulations supplement and may further restrict those rules.

#### **General Rules for all Divisions**

1. Metal spikes are not allowed.
2. No jewelry or hard head bands may be worn while playing.
3. No smoking by any coach, assistant coach or manager is allowed. Only one warning will be given, after which the person will be removed from the game.
4. Consumption of alcoholic beverages anywhere in the general area of the playing field, player benches, spectator areas or parking lots by any coach, player, parent, or spectator is not allowed.
5. Should any coach be ejected from a game, the coach will also be suspended for the following game and the incident will be subject to review by the Board of Directors. An assistant coach or a parent will assume responsibility for the team in the coach’s absence.
6. Should any player be ejected from a game, the player will also be suspended for the following game and the incident will be subject to review by the Board of Directors.
7. Verbal abuse directed towards an umpire or any member of the opposing team by any coach, player, assistant coach, manager, or spectator will not be tolerated. One warning will be issued. In the event that the behavior continues, the offending person will be asked to leave the field. Should the person not leave the field, the game will be forfeited.
8. All batters and base runners must wear a helmet at all times during games and practices. A chinstrap is optional.
9. Any player warming up a pitcher must wear a facemask, whether on the field of play or the sidelines.
10. During the actual game, pitchers may not warm up behind the center area of the backstop (i.e., in line with the pitcher’s circle and home plate).
11. No one, including coaches and parents, may be within 20 feet of the center of the backstop during play. Those standing near the backstop must not distract or otherwise hinder any of the players, and must move from that area if requested to do so by the umpire.

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12. All players must play a minimum of three (3) full defensive innings by the end of the fifth inning.
13. A team will play with ten (10) players in the field. A minimum of eight (8) players is required to avoid a forfeit. Should a team have more than ten (10) players, all players will bat regardless of their status as a defensive player.
14. **Call-up rule:** Teams with nine (9) players or less may “call up” players from a younger division to reach a maximum of ten (10) players. In the event that a regular member of a team arrives prior to game time, she will play in place of a player called up. Coaches are urged to use discretion and only call up those players considered ready to advance to that division.
15. The bases are permanently set at 60 feet. First base consists of two parts. The first part is a white base that is in the field of play and should be used by the first base defensive player to make the play. The second part is an orange base and is in foul territory. Runners should generally run to the orange part of first base to avoid collisions. The only exception to this rule is when the ball is hit to the outfield or past an infield player. In this case, the runner may “round” the base on the white portion. It is the responsibility of the first base defensive player to move out of the way in this situation to avoid a collision.
16. The pitching style is fast pitch. All ASA-approved deliveries are allowable.
17. All pitchers **must** pitch from the distance set forth in the ASA Official Rules of Softball for Women’s Fast Pitch Softball for the division in which they are playing. The only exception to this rule is for play in the Intermediate (10 and under) division. In this case, upon agreement of both coaches and the umpire, a girl that is struggling to pitch from the established distance (35 feet) may be allowed to move five (5) feet closer. **Coaches are urged to exercise caution. No pitcher should ever be allowed to pitch from the closer distance if their safety would be compromised.**
18. Generally, a pitcher is allowed to pitch a maximum of four full innings per game. The only exception to this rule is in the event of a game that requires extra innings. In this case, and only in this case, a pitcher will be allowed to pitch more than four innings per game. For purposes of determining innings pitched, a pitcher pitching to a minimum of one batter will be considered to have pitched one full inning. If a pitcher is replaced, but returns to face additional batters in the same inning, the pitcher will only be charged with one inning.
19. There are unlimited substitutions. Therefore, a player may re-enter the game at any time.
20. Except for teams in the Ponytail division, teams will bat the maximum of their entire bench or until three outs are made. The team with the least amount of players will dictate the maximum number of players to bat each inning, but not less than 10. In the sixth, seventh, and extra innings, a team will keep batting until three outs are made.

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21. The last batter of an inning must either put the ball in play or strike out. If the scheduled last batter is hit by a pitch, the player is awarded first base and the inning will be extended with the next batter needing to either put the ball in play or strike out. Should the last batter of an inning successfully reach base, the inning will end only when the ball is returned to the pitcher's circle and all runners have advanced to the base they were attempting when the ball is returned. For example, a runner that has passed third base and is attempting to reach home plate before the ball reaches the pitcher's circle, will count as a run scored, but a runner that has not yet reached third base when the ball is returned would not count as a run scored.
22. There will be one warning per team for throwing the bat. For subsequent infractions, the batter will be called out, the ball is dead, and runners will not be allowed to advance.
23. Weeknight games will begin promptly at 6:30 pm. There will be a time limit of 2 hours, for purposes of determining the start of the last inning. Therefore, no new inning will start after 8:30 pm. The new inning time limit for weekend games will be 1 hour, 45 minutes unless otherwise established by the Executive Committee prior to the scheduled game date. The time limit will begin as of the **scheduled start time** of the game. **Coaches and players should arrive early enough to allow for proper warm up and to start the game promptly at the scheduled time. A team that is not ready to play within 15 minutes of the scheduled (or appropriately delayed) start time will forfeit the game.** The start of a game should not be delayed because there is no umpire. In these situations, both coaches should mutually agree on a volunteer to umpire the game. Should the scheduled umpire arrive after the game has begun, he/she will assume responsibility from the volunteer and should be briefed on the status of the game by both coaches.
24. Players must wear the uniforms supplied by the league. Sweatpants and/or sweatshirts may be worn during cold weather play. In no case may a player wear a sweatshirt or coat with a hood.
25. Rosters of all teams within the same division will be made available to all coaches within that division.
26. The teams will shake hands after every game. Any player caught spitting on their hands during the post-game handshake will be suspended for the next game.
27. Coaches and players should exercise good judgment with the selection of cheers. While cheering is always welcomed and encouraged, the cheers must be done in a positive and supportive manner. Cheers should never be negative against the opposing team or players, or the umpire.
28. Only the Board of Directors can make rule changes. Coaches are not allowed to change rules, even if both coaches agree. Teams not adhering to the rules established by the Board of Directors will forfeit their games.

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29. There will be no rescheduling of games due to personal commitments of the head coach. An assistant coach should be trained and available to run the team in the event the head coach is unavailable.
30. Coaches that are aware that they will not have the minimum number of players required to play a game should attempt to call up players. If, after doing so, the team will still not have enough players, the division liaison should be contacted at least two (2) days prior to the scheduled game to allow for an opportunity to reschedule.
31. Game protests must be made with the umpire at the time of the play in question. No protests will be allowed after play has resumed. The details of the protest must be documented in both scorebooks and the umpire and both head coaches must sign both scorebooks at the time of the protest. A written protest must be filed with the league President within 72 hours of the game. A \$25 fee, which will be returned only if the protest is upheld, must accompany written protests.
32. Both coaches, or their designees, are responsible for notifying their division liaison of the final score within four (4) days of the game. Failure to report a final score within one week of a game will result in the game being counted as a loss for both teams. When reporting the scores, every effort should be made to include a brief publicity article for inclusion in the West Seneca Bee.

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#### **Rules Specific to the Pigtail (6 and Under) and Ponytail (8 and Under) Divisions**

Based upon the number of players that register for the Pigtail division, the Board of Directors may combine the Pigtail and Ponytail divisions.

1. The ball used is an eleven (11) inch Incrediball.
2. No scoring is kept.
3. The normal game is four (4) innings. However, no game should last more than 1 hour, 45 minutes.
4. Defensive players are encouraged to make plays. However, three outs do not end an inning. Each team will bat their entire lineup each inning. This may be adjusted by mutual consent of both coaches.
5. Coaches are allowed to revise their batting order each inning.
6. Each coach, or their designee, pitches to their batters. Pitching must be done underhand. An **adult** catcher is to be supplied by each hitting team.
7. Each batter will receive ten (10) pitches. After 10 pitches, the adult catcher may help the batter hit the ball or a batting tee may be used. Every batter should hit the ball and have an opportunity to run to first base.
8. A ball hit in fair territory should travel at least six (6) feet to be in play. It is the responsibility of the pitching coach to make the call.
9. There should not be any forfeits. If one team has too few players and the other team has extra players, the team with extra players should “loan” players to the team without enough players.
10. A minimum of one (1) and a maximum of three (3) defensive coaches should be on the field to direct their players.
11. A total of six (6) defensive players may be in the infield (the player playing the pitcher’s position and five others). All other players must be in the outfield and outside of the base paths to prevent collisions.
12. Infield and outfield players should be rotated. Each player must play the outfield at least two innings, unless the team has less than twelve (12) players. In this situation, each player must play at least one inning in the outfield and each player must play at least two innings in the infield.
13. A batter and base runner may advance one base on a hit to the infield. A batter and base runner may advance a maximum of two bases on a hit to the outfield.

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14. To encourage the players to make plays, there will be no advancing by a runner on overthrows.

**Rules Specific to the Pigtail (6 and Under) and Ponytail (8 and Under) Divisions  
(Continued)**

*Additional Rules Specific to the Pigtail Division*

The following rules amend, or are in addition to, the rules listed above:

1. This division will use a batting tee as opposed to coach-pitch.
2. Defensive players are encouraged to make plays. However, every batter will run the bases, even if an out is made.
3. A player may not leave the base until the ball is struck.

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### Rules Specific to the Intermediate (10 and Under) Division

1. The ball used is an eleven (11) inch ASA approved softball.
2. All pitchers **must** pitch from the distance set forth in the ASA Official Rules of Softball for Women's Fast Pitch Softball for the division in which they are playing. The only exception to this rule is for play in the Intermediate (10 and under) division. In this case, upon agreement of both coaches and the umpire, a girl that is struggling to pitch from the established distance (35 feet) may be allowed to move five (5) feet closer. **Coaches are urged to exercise caution. No pitcher should ever be allowed to pitch from the closer distance if their safety would be compromised.**
3. No more than two consecutive walks (bases on balls) are permitted ("two walk rule"). After two consecutive walks have occurred, the next batter must either put the ball in play or strike out. Once the batter has either put the ball in play or struck out, the two walk rule is again in effect. There is no limit to the number of times the two walk rule applies during an inning. If a player that must either put the ball in play or strike out is hit by a pitch, the player is awarded first base and the next batter must either put the ball in play or strike out.
4. The two walk rule applies to each pitcher, not to the team. For example, if pitcher A walks two batters and pitcher B is brought in to pitch to the next batter, pitcher B must give up two walks before the next batter needs to put the ball in play or strike out.
5. There is no infield fly rule.
6. There is no bunting.
7. There is no dropped third strike rule.
8. Stealing is allowed, but a runner may only advance one base by a steal. For example, if a runner hits a single or is walked or hit by a pitch, that runner may steal second base. However, if the player does steal second base, then she will not be allowed to advance to any other base by a steal. A runner who is on second base and who advanced to that base by other than a steal, may steal third base. A runner stealing a base may be played on, but no additional bases are awarded as a result of a misplay or overthrow. Catchers are to be encouraged to throw the ball down on a steal without penalty (i.e. advancing of the runner) if the throw is off. **In no case is a runner allowed to steal home.**
9. A total of ten (10) defensive players are allowed on the field. Four (4) of the ten players must be outfielders and must be stationed no closer than the beginning edge of the outfield grass.
10. A 15 run mercy rule will be enforced. If a team leads by 15 or more runs after the end of five innings, the game will end and the score will be final.

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11. If a pitcher hits two batters in one inning, the pitcher must be removed for the remainder of the inning. The removed pitcher may, however, occupy another position. The removed pitcher may return in a subsequent inning, but if she hits one more batter, she may not pitch for the remainder of the game.

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**Rules Specific to the Modified (13 and Under) Division**

1. No more than two consecutive walks (bases on balls) are permitted (“two walk rule”). After two consecutive walks have occurred, the next batter must either put the ball in play or strike out. Once the batter has either put the ball in play or struck out, the two walk rule is again in effect. There is no limit to the number of times the two walk rule applies during an inning. If a player that must either put the ball in play or strike out is hit by a pitch, the player is awarded first base and the next batter must either put the ball in play or strike out.
2. The two walk rule applies to each pitcher, not to the team. For example, if pitcher A walks two batters and pitcher B is brought in to pitch to the next batter, pitcher B must give up two walks before the next batter needs to put the ball in play or strike out.
3. The infield fly rule will be enforced.
4. Bunting is allowed.
5. There is no dropped third strike rule.
6. Stealing is allowed, except for home. A player who is stealing third base may not advance to home if the catcher, or any other player, overthrows third base for the purpose of trying to throw the runner out. However, if a runner is stationary at third base and the catcher attempts a pick-off throw, the runner may try to advance to home at her own risk.
7. A total of ten (10) defensive players are allowed on the field. Four (4) of the ten players must be outfielders and must be stationed no closer than the beginning edge of the outfield grass.
8. A 15 run mercy rule will be enforced. If a team leads by 15 or more runs after the end of five innings, the game will end and the score will be final.

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**Rules Specific to the Senior (Graduating High School Seniors and Under) Division**

1. A total of ten (10) defensive players are allowed on the field. Four (4) of the ten players must be outfielders and must be stationed no closer than the beginning edge of the outfield grass.
2. A 15 run mercy rule will be enforced. If a team leads by 15 or more runs after the end of five innings, the game will end and the score will be final.

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#### **Article II – Registration and Team Assignments**

1. General league registration will be held during January and February. The specific dates are generally set by the Town of West Seneca Recreation Department.
2. A player may register subsequent to general registration, but prior to the date uniforms are ordered, subject to roster space availability. Any player registering after the general registration will be charged a late registration fee of \$10.
3. Players that register prior to the WSGSA meeting at which player assignments are finalized (generally mid-March) will be given an opportunity to select the coach for whom they wish to play. Players will be assigned to teams based upon the following criteria:
  - a. The daughter, step-daughter, granddaughter, or other family member of the head coach and, if assigned prior to registration, the assistant coach, will be given first preference.
  - b. Those players who played for a coach in the immediate prior season and who wish to play for that coach again will be given second preference. This preference only relates to the immediate prior season. For example, if a player played for a coach in 2007, but not in 2008, she will not be given preferential status for 2009. This preference also extends to a new coach who is taking over responsibility for a prior coach's team. In instances where a coach coached 2 or more teams in the prior season, each team will be considered separate for purposes of this rule. For example, assume a coach had teams in the ponytail and intermediate divisions in the prior season, but only has a team in the intermediate division in the current season. The coach must declare, prior to registration, which team will have preference. The players on that team in the prior season will receive second-level preference and the players on the other team in the prior season will **NOT** receive second-level preference.
  - c. Siblings of players that qualify for second preference under b. above will also receive second-level preference. Siblings of players on a team that do not qualify for second-level preference under b. above will be given third preference for that team's coach.
  - d. All other roster slots will be filled based upon the coach preference listed at the time of registration on a first-come, first-served basis.
  - e. Players registering subsequent to the meeting at which player assignments are finalized will be placed on teams according to roster availability.

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**Article III – Travel Team and Tournament Team Restrictions**

1. Each Travel team shall properly post notice for, and hold, try-outs. Including a try-out notice in the West Seneca Bee and/or West Seneca Penny Saver shall be considered proper posting.
2. Preference will be given to residents of the Town of West Seneca and/or West Seneca School District (“Residents” or singular, “Resident”).
3. Each travel team may generally have a maximum of three (3) non-Resident, non-exempt players. The only exception to this rule is the situation where the team roster cannot be filled due to a lack of Resident players. In this situation, and only this situation, may the team roster contain more than three (3) non-Resident, non-exempt players. For purposes of this exception, the team requesting relief must have properly posted notice for, and held, try-outs.
4. Players meeting one or more of the following criteria will be granted “exempt” status and will be considered to be a Resident for purposes of determining the non-Resident maximum:
  - a. a non-Resident player who, prior to January 1, 2000, has played for a travel team for a minimum of three (3) **complete** seasons; for purposes of this rule, a player will be considered to have played a complete season if she is on the roster prior to the first scheduled game and remains on the roster through the last scheduled game;
  - b. a non-Resident player who has been registered to play in the House league for at least five (5) years; or
  - c. other non-Resident players who, from time to time, will be granted exempt status by the Board of Directors.
5. Any player registered for the House league is eligible to play on any tournament (non-travel) team.