

**MTBSA / NPVGSA  
Nor Gwyn Softball  
Minors Division  
Rules and Guidelines**

**April 2018**

## **I. League Objective**

Montgomery Township Baseball and Softball Association (MTBSA), North Penn Valley Girls Softball Association (NPVGSA) and Nor Gwyn Softball have agreed to play a joint game schedule during the spring season, to offer the best possible experience for the girls in their respective softball programs.

## **II. Rules of the game**

The rules and guidelines contained in this document pertain to the Minors Division, namely girls who are 9-10 years of age. Our organizations will adopt the rules of softball as defined in the ASA "2007 Official Rules of Softball." The rules contained in this document are meant to highlight important ASA rules for this division, add to ASA rules or supersede similar ASA rules. If there is a conflict between an ASA rule and a rule in this document, the rule in this document shall take precedence.

### **Coaches**

If at any time during the season a MTBSA coach, Head Coach or Assistant Coach, is ejected by an umpire that coach will be banned from coaching for one year effective the date of ejection. A second ejection in subsequent years will result in a lifetime ban from coaching under MTBSA.

### **A. General**

- 1) Warm up: Home team has use of the field thirty minutes prior to the game for fifteen minutes and visiting team will use it fifteen minutes prior to the game for fifteen minutes
- 2) Team must have a minimum of eight players to start game and must have at least seven to finish or team will forfeit game. Game time is 6:00 with a ten minute grace time. If you can get the game going with using other teams players get the game started. If the team does not have the correct amount of girls at 6:10 the game will be a forfeit. If this happens have the game continue so the girls get to play and get a game in
- 3) An 11" optical yellow softball will be used. Reduced injury factor (RIF) balls are permitted
- 4) Score will be kept. It is the responsibility of the home team coach to get the scoring results of the game entered online. Standings will be maintained and may be used for playoff bracket seeding at the end of the regular season
- 5) Strike Zone: Between the batter's armpits and knees; 6 inches off plate on each side

## B. Regulation Game

- 1) A regulation game shall consist of six innings or 2 hours, whichever comes first (a 7<sup>th</sup> inning can be played per rule b4). No new inning shall begin if 1 hour and 50 minutes of game play has elapsed. If a new inning begins before 1 hour and 50 min. has elapsed, then that inning can be played to completion, subject to rule B.7.
  - a) For regular season games, the 5 run rule per inning is in effect for all innings, unless the coaches have agreed that the 6<sup>th</sup> inning (or last inning, if 6 cannot be played) will end in 3 outs. If it appears that the 5<sup>th</sup> inning will be the last inning due to time constraints, impending darkness, or weather, both coaches must agree prior to the start of the inning whether the inning will end in 3 outs.
  - b) For playoffs, the 5 run rule per inning rule shall be in effect, it is waived for the 6<sup>th</sup> inning. The 6<sup>th</sup> inning must end in 3 outs. Playoff games will be considered complete after the 4<sup>th</sup> inning is played. This may come into affect with weather issues.
- 2) A full six innings need not be played if the team second at bat has scored more runs after the top of the sixth inning, or before the third out in the last of the sixth inning
- 3) A game that is tied at the end of the six innings (or 2 hours) shall be considered a tie game during regular season play. If coaches agree, a 7<sup>th</sup> inning can be played to try and break the tie as long as the inning would not start after 1 hour and 50 minutes has elapsed. During season ending tournament or playoffs, tie games shall be continued by playing additional innings until one side has scored more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning; or until the team second at bat has scored more runs in their half of the inning before the third out is made.
- 4) A game called by the umpire shall be regulation if either:
  - a) Four or more complete innings have been played, or
  - b) If the team second at bat has scored more runs in three or more innings than the other team has scored in four or more innings.
- 5) If after 4 or 5 complete innings, the umpire calls the game and the score is tied, then the game is considered a tie game during regular season, but if during playoffs, must be resumed at the point the game was called at a time when it is again safe to play
- 6) Games that are not considered regulation or regulation tie games shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped
- 7) Both coaches are empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, or other causes which place the players in peril. In the absence of an official umpire, any League official is empowered to call a game. If no League official is present, then both coaches can agree to call the game. If a game is called before completion of an inning, the score shall revert to the last full inning of play.

## **C. Responsibilities**

The Home Field Team is responsible for the following:

- 1) Lining and preparing the field
- 2) Providing an umpire (for purposes of providing an umpire, home field team is considered to be the team who is hosting the game at their field)
- 3) Setting up bases and pitching rubber
- 4) Providing two game balls
- 5) Returning bases and any other field equipment to the field storage box and locking the box (as required)
- 6) Calling off the game due to rain or field conditions by contacting the opposing coach and umpire
- 7) Rescheduling any postponed games through the appropriate league official
- 8) Entering the score of the game online within 24 hours of the completion of the game

## **D. Players**

- 1) All players must be in proper uniform (shirt, shorts, socks, visor as per their respective league)e
- 2) Shirts should be tucked in and visors worn forward
- 3) Players are not permitted to wear jewelry of any kind. This includes earrings (no tape on earrings), necklaces, watches, rings, etc.
- 4) Mouthpieces are recommended but not required
- 5) Plastic cleats should be worn. Metal cleats are not permitted
- 6) The batter and all base runners are required to wear helmets, with face guards and chin straps, at all times
- 7) All players should exhibit good sportsmanship before, during and after all games
- 8) Any player who throws equipment, or acts in an unsportsmanlike manner, or acts in a matter inconsistent with our respective leagues' code of conduct will be taken out of the game by her coach

## **E. Offense**

- 1) The 5 run rule is in effect. The end of a half inning occurs after 5 runs are scored.
- 2) All players bat whether they are playing the field or not, the batting order is continuous
- 3) If a base runner is to be catcher in the next inning, the team may have a substitute runner. This is to occur with two outs only. The substitute runner shall be the last player who made an out

- 4) Runners may leave the base upon release of the ball by the opposing pitcher. There will be one warning per inning for leaving a base early. A runner will be called out the second time it occurs in the same inning
- 5) Stealing
  - a) Stealing of second base and home is not permitted
  - b) Stealing of third base is permitted a maximum of three times per inning.
- 6) Throwing of bats is not permitted. Player gets one warning. On second occurrence, the batter will be called out
- 7) Only ASA-approved bats are permitted
- 8) Bunting is allowed. A foul bunt as the third strike is an out
- 9) No infield fly rule
- 10) No run-ahead (slaughter) rule
- 11) Runner may "tag up" on a fly ball at her own risk, but may advance only one base
- 12) A dead ball will be declared if the pitched ball hits the batter. The batter will be awarded first base if in the opinion of the umpire, the player made an effort to avoid being hit by the pitched ball. (Batter has option to stay and continue her at bat instead of taking first base, except if she is hit for ball four in which case she is awarded first base with no option.)
- 13) Sliding is permitted, feet first only (no head first slides), but no sliding into first base
- 14) Base runners must either slide or avoid the defensive player covering the base if there is a play on the base runner at any base. The base runner will be called out if they do not attempt to slide or avoid a collision with the defensive player who is attempting to make the tag or play at the base

## **F. Defense**

- 1) As long as they arrive at the beginning of the game:
  - a) Each player should play a minimum of three innings per six-inning game
  - b) Each player should play a minimum of one inning in the infield (pitcher and catcher are infield positions)
- 2) No player should sit for two innings before every player has sat for one inning
- 3) Infielders should be placed in normal position; outfielders must be in the grass beyond infield. This means an umbrella style four outfielders.
- 4) There should normally be ten players in the field, consisting of a catcher, five infielders (including the pitcher), and four outfielders. There should be no more than five players in the infield, one being the pitcher

- 5) If there are less than ten players, the coach can remove players at any position except pitcher and catcher. The opposing coach is permitted to provide one of its players to play defense at one of the outfield positions for the short-handed team
- 6) If a ball is overthrown and goes out of play, runners are awarded one base past the base they were going to (e.g. runner going to second is awarded third base). A ball which wedges under the out of play fence is considered out of play
- 7) A live ball is declared dead when a fielder throws the ball to the pitcher and she has control of it in the pitching circle. The play stops at this point. A base runner may advance to the next base on a dead ball if, and only if, she is past halfway to the next base. If she is not past halfway, she must return to the original base. The defense may make the play at the base in lieu of throwing to the pitcher to end the play, in which case the ball shall remain live
- 8) A fielder is not permitted to block a runner from touching any base if the fielder is not in possession of the ball. A dead ball obstruction will be called and the runner is automatically safe
- 9) No dropped third strike

## **G. Pitching**

- 1) A player may pitch up to three innings per game. One pitch in an inning constitutes an inning.
- 2) If a pitcher hits two batters in one inning, pitcher must be pulled for that inning and may be allowed to re-enter in another inning. This is only if the batter makes an attempt to avoid the pitched ball
- 3) Maximum walks per inning is three. Once the third walk has been surrendered a coach will pitch upon the 4<sup>th</sup> ball thrown to any subsequent batter during the inning. The strike count will remain in effect and the batter has the potential to strike out but cannot walk. Upon the coach stepping in to pitch the pitcher will assume the defensive position and remain in the field.

## **H. Coaches**

- 1) On offense, coaches must remain in the coaching boxes. A coach may not touch a player while the ball is live and in play. If a runner overruns a base and the coach stops her and pushes her back into the playing field, the runner is out
- 2) On defense, all coaches must coach from the bench area

## **I. Umpires**

Home field team is responsible for providing an umpire. Umpires should be assigned before the game. If an umpire does not show up for the game, coaches should solicit volunteers from the spectators. A coach as umpire is discouraged

## **J. Field Layout**

- 1) Base paths will be 60 feet.
- 2) Pitching rubber will be 35 feet from home plate and is measured from the back of home plate to the middle-front edge of the pitching rubber
- 3) Ball is out of play anywhere past the fence lines or where both coaches and the umpire may agree based on specific field layout. A ball that wedges under an out-of-play fence or other object is considered out of play
- 4) A double first base will be used to minimize the risk of injury. The white portion of the base will reside in fair territory while the orange portion of the base will be in foul territory. If the runner decides to run through first base (instead of taking the turn towards second base), every attempt should be made to step on the orange portion of the double base and into foul territory, although the runner will not be penalized for contacting any white portion of the base

## **K. Safety:**

- 1) At the first sign of lightening, the game is called
- 2) Any bleeding caused by impact with ball, player, or anything else will require player to come out of the game and appropriate medical attention given. They may not return in that game unless deemed safe by discretion of coaches, parents, and opposing coaches, as well as the wound be entirely covered up.

## **L. Roster Substitutions**

- 1) During regular season play, teams may call up players from younger divisions if they cannot provide the required number of players (per section A.2. Any player who is called up must be a registered member of the organization. No roster player shall sit out any inning while a call-up player is in the field. No call ups from other Minor teams is allowed.
- 2) During playoffs, no call ups are permitted. Teams must use players from their roster, and if they cannot field the required number of players (per section A.2, then they forfeit that game.

## **M. Forfeits**

- 1) Regular Season Games: Before the end of the regular season, teams should make every effort to reschedule any game that is canceled. If a canceled game does not get replayed before the end of the regular season, then the following rules will apply regarding scoring:
  - a) If a game was canceled due to weather, then the score shall be 0-0.
  - b) If Team A is playing Team B, and the game is canceled due to Team A's inability to field the required number of players, or if Team A offers a forfeit to Team B, then score shall be 6-0 in favor of Team B (one run awarded per inning to the winner).
- 2) Playoffs: All playoff games must be played per the playoff schedule. Games will not be rescheduled unless canceled due to weather.
  - a) If a game is canceled due to weather, the Home teams will reschedule the game and any subsequent games that are affected by the canceled game.
  - b) If Team A is playing Team B, and Team A is unable to field the required number of players, or if Team A offers a forfeit to Team B, then score shall be 6-0 in favor of Team B (one run awarded per inning to the winner).

## **N. Playoffs**

Single elimination playoffs will immediately follow the regular season. Playoff schedules will be published immediately after the regular season has ended. Playoff bracket seeding will be established based upon regular season standings. The top five teams will get a bye and six vs. seven will play in.

## **III. Rule Changes**

The MTBSA/NPVGSA/Nor Gwyn Softball Minors Division Rules and Guidelines contained herein may be changed at any time to allow for changes in league policy, introduction of piloted training programs, or any other factor that seeks to improve the quality of instruction and recreation for the players. All changes require joint approval by the appropriate league officials