

## Sun and Fun Tri County Senior Softball League, Inc. (SFSSI)

### Playing Rules

The Sun and Fun Tri County Senior Softball League, Inc. (SFSSI) playing rules govern play in the SFSSI league. The operations committee will review rule(s) that are not covered in the SFSSI rules and refer to the 2023 (SSUSA) rule book for guidance.

#### Section I: Players per Team:

- 1.1 Teams consist of no less than 9 players.
- 1.2. No more than 11 players can play on defense.
- 1.3. A team with only 9 players can borrow players from the opposing team.
- 1.4. **When a team requests a player(s) from the opposing team to fill out their 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> defensive lineup, that player(s) will be placed at the bottom of the batting order and an out recorded each time that position in the lineup comes to bats.**
- 1.5 A team with less than 9 players will forfeit the game.

#### Section II: Substitution:

- 2.1 There are unlimited substitutions on defense, so long as that player is in the offensive lineup.
- 2.2 Player(s) leaving a game due to injury or illness with no substitution available their spot in the lineup will be skipped and no out declared. The player may not return to the lineup or game.
  - 2.2.1 **A player(s) ejected from a game with no substitute available, their spot in the batting lineup will be declared an out and recorded every time the ejected player(s) position in the lineup comes to bat.**
- 2.3 Starting player(s) can be substituted for and re-enter the game just one time in the same batting position.

#### Section III: Courtesy Runner:

**3.0 Courtesy Runner: Any player on the lineup sheet at the start of the game may be a courtesy runner. A courtesy runner is limited to a single and must stop at 1<sup>st</sup> base with all base runners advancing at will. The rule does not apply to a home run. The courtesy runner can only advance to second base if the ball goes out of the field of play on an overthrow or fielding error.**

- 3.1 A courtesy runner can be used for the batter from home plate or base at any time.
- 3.2 The courtesy runner must be in the offensive lineup and can only run once per inning or be called out.
- 3.3 A courtesy runner may not replace a courtesy runner except in case of injury to that runner.
- 3.4 A courtesy runner on base when it is his turn at bat, will be called out as the runner and must bat.
- 3.5 A player becomes a courtesy runner when the umpire puts the ball back in play and calls play ball.
- 3.6 Once the umpire calls play ball a team may not switch to another courtesy runner.

**3.7** When a batter using a courtesy runner, hits the ball, runs, and crosses the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> base runner's line regardless of where the courtesy runner is, the batter is declared out, dead ball, no runner advancement. The field diagram has been updated to show this line.

#### **Section IV: Base Running:**

**4.0 Home Runs:** The batter does not run; base runners do not advance and vacate the infield. The appropriate number of runs scored will be logged by the scorekeeper(s).

**4.1** A courtesy runner may not get a running start to the home plate running line.

**4.2** A runner(s) may not leave the base they are entitled to before the following:

- The ball reaches the plate.
- Hits the ground in or around home plate.
- The batter swings at or hits the ball.

**4.3** When a play is being made at 1<sup>st</sup> base the runner will be called out for the following:

1. Not observing the running line.
2. A play made at 1<sup>st</sup> base and no red bag obstruction touching a portion of the white base is out. When no play is made at 1<sup>st</sup> base the runner may touch the white or red base and advance toward second.
3. A run by at 1<sup>st</sup> base the runner does not have to return to 1<sup>st</sup> base before advancing to 2<sup>nd</sup> base.
4. A runner may not dive or slide into 1<sup>st</sup> base or home while moving toward that base but can dive or slide back to 1<sup>st</sup> base to avoid an out.

**4.4** A runner may dive or slide into 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base. The runner must tag the base since there is no run-by rule in the Sun and Fun league. To avoid a collision the runner is allowed to run up to 2' on either side of the base but not by the base and is subject to the discretion of the closest umpire.

**4.5** A runner is out by force or tag except the following: Home plate, between the commitment line and the alternate home plate or home plate line.

**4.6 Contact:** The league policy on contact by a runner, if considered intentional by the umpire closest to the contact, that runner is declared out. Contact deemed incidental by the closest umpire to the play does not affect the result of the play. **(See 4.8)**

**4.7 Interference:** The act of an offensive player or team member that impedes or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. A base runner must avoid a fielder making a play.

**4.7.1 Obstruction:** When a fielder who does not possess the ball nor in the act of fielding a batted ball impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner legally running the bases. Obstruction by the defensive player will result in an extra base(s) for that runner if the umpire calls.

**4.8** When a **Runner** intentionally collides with a defensive player attempting to field the ball, make a throw, or tag the runner, except at home plate, that runner will be called out. If both umpires conclude that the runner intentionally collided with the fielder in a manner that would cause injury to the fielder the runner will be ejected from the game. If determined that the **Defensive Player** intentionally collided with the runner the same standard applies. In both cases, both managers are required to report the incident to the league president, vice president, and division representative within 24 hours. Additional action may follow if league rules **13.0 through 13.7 apply.**

**4.9** There is no limit to the number of bases a runner can advance when the ball is in play.

**4.10** The outfield must be a minimum of 235' to have an automatic over-the-fence home run.

**4.11** A runner advancing to the next base can reverse direction one time only when a play is being made on him/her unless he/she has passed the commitment line which is located 20' from the alternate home plate or alternate home plate run line.

**4.12** Runners attempting to score must run to the alternate home plate/line or be called out if touching the regular home plate. If any part of the runner's anatomy breaks the plain of the home plate area (Batter's Box) that runner is declared out but the play in progress continues to the conclusion.

**4.13** A force out at home is accomplished by the defensive player touching any portion of the strike mat while in possession of the ball.

#### **Section V: Bats – Balls:**

**5.1** A legal bat used in the Sun and Fun Tri-County Senior League (SFSSI), must be listed by the ASA or USA on the approved bat list published on July 3, 2008, or has been approved after that date

for use by the **ASA/USA**. A bat with an ASA certification mark introduced in 2013 is approved for play in the Sun and Fun Tri-County Senior Softball League (SFSSI).

**5.2** Bats listed by the ASA or USA on their non-approved list published on July 3, 2008, or beyond that date are illegal and cannot be used in Sun and Fun Tri-County Senior Softball League (SFSSI) games.

**5.3** A bat that does not appear on the **ASA or USA approved or non-approved list** published on July 3, 2008, is considered illegal and cannot be used in Sun and Fun Tri-County Senior Softball league (SFSSI) play unless the bat(s) has been approved subsequently to the July 3, 2008, date for slow pitch use by the **ASA/USA**. Managers in the Sun and Fun Tri-County Senior Softball League (SFSSI) are responsible for ensuring that any bat conforms to the standards stated above.

**5.4** The official ball used in the Sun and Fun Tri-County Senior Softball League (SFSSI) effective 11-3-2017 is the: "Trump Stote 12-inch., 44 Core, 375 Compression, Optic Yellow, Red or Black stitching".

**5.5** The home team will provide (1) one new approved ball in the wrapper, and (1) one good used approved ball to the Umpire before the game starts.

**5.6** A player caught using an illegal bat will be called out and ejected from the game. When the owner of the bat in question cannot be determined the manager of the team in possession of the bat will be held responsible. Managers from each team must notify their division representative within (12) twelve hours after the game in question.

**5.6.1** The division representative will contact the President of the league who oversees the operations committee within (12) hours after the complaint has been issued.

**5.6.2** The player in possession of the illegal bat as stated in section 5.6 has the right to appeal to the operations committee which will convene a meeting to hear the complaint within 48 hours and decide on the complaint.

**5.6.3** If A player is found in violation of the rule on illegal bats the following penalties will be assessed:

- First offense: (Player-Owner) Suspension for 14 games. (Manager) 14 games if no Owner is identified. Game forfeiture.
- Second Offense: (Player, Owner, Manager) Suspension for 28 games. Game forfeiture.
- Third Offense: (Player, Owner, Manager) Lifetime Suspension.

**5.7** Any bat used during the game must remain in the bat rack throughout the entire game. A bat cannot be used unless it comes from the bat rack used during the game.

**5.8** All bats must have a label identifying the owner or team.

**5.9** Bat warmers are legal but must be hung adjacent to the bat rack used during the game.

**5.10** Bats must be free of dents, cracks, and burrs. Bats with defects must be removed before play.

**5.11** The Miken Freak 98 is illegal unless it has a serial number visible on the barrel of the bat.

**5.12 Warm-up bats:** The on-deck batter is allowed two league-approved bats in the on-deck area that meet the following requirements:

- Stamped (WB) in one-quarter inch letters or marked (Warm-up Bat) on the bat barrel.
- A minimum weight of 48 oz.
- A minimum barrel diameter of 2-1/4" (two and one-quarter inches)
- Must have a safety grip of 8" and no more than 15" extended from the knob.
- Must be a one-piece construction or a one-piece assembled bat approved by SSUSA/SSWC

**5.13** No attachments (donuts, fans, etc.) are allowed on an approved league bat except for the "Pow'R Wrap" warm-up attachment.

## **Section VI: Official Game:**

**6.1** An official game is **(8)** innings unless extra innings are needed to break a tie game.

**6.2** A game is considered official after the losing team has batted 5 times.

**6.3** When extra innings are required to break a tie game the following rules apply:

1. Each team starts the inning with a runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> base.
2. The batter who made the last out in the previous inning and has completed his/her turn at bat will go to second base.

3. If that batter who made the last out had a courtesy runner, that runner will go to 2<sup>nd</sup> base and cannot be replaced until that courtesy runner reaches 3<sup>rd</sup> base.

**6.4** To make a game official the officiating umpires must hold a current umpire certification card on file with the Sun and Fun Tri-County Senior Softball League (SFSSI). The use of non-certified umpire(s) not holding this certification will result in a forfeiture of that game.

**6.5 The SFSSI requires the use of 2 certified umpires, (1) at home plate and (1) for the bases.**

**6.6** The game umpires must keep control of the game, and should a disruption occur by any player, coach, or fan(s) that impedes the flow of the game, those umpire(s) have the right to stop the game and award a forfeit against the team involved.

**6.7** The home team has the responsibility to provide an official scorekeeper for all home games.

### **Section VII: Pitching Screen:**

**7.1** The pitching screen approved for play starting with the 2021-22 season has the max following dimensions: **Width: 30"- 42", Height "72-78."**

**7.2** Each community must make an approved pitching screen available for each game.

**7.3** Pitchers have the discretion to use an approved pitching screen. Once the inning begins the following rules apply:

1. The screen must be positioned no more than 4' in front of the rubber and must cover a minimum of 50% of the rubber from side to side.
2. Once the pitch is delivered the pitcher must be behind the screen when the ball gets to the strike zone, hits the ground, or is hit by the batter. If the pitcher does not move behind the screen, he/she will be given (2) two warnings and removed from pitching on the 3<sup>rd</sup> third warning but can remain in the game at a different position.
3. When a pitcher, pitching to a batter, hits the pitching screen, the call is a ball which could result in a walk and runner advancement.

4. When a pitcher does not move behind the screen and fields a batted ball, the umpire will declare a dead ball, issue a warning to the pitcher, under 7.3.2, and award the batter 1<sup>st</sup> base with all the other on-base runner moving one base.

**7.4** A batted ball striking the screen is declared a dead ball, and no pitch count is incurred.

**7.5** When the pitcher is removed for violating the screening policy and the team does not have a replacement pitcher, they will forfeit the game.

**7.6** When only one team uses the pitching screen, they are responsible for moving the screen on and off the field between innings.

**7.7** The pitcher may pitch from anywhere in a box that extends 6' directly behind and no wider than the pitching rubber. A second pitching rubber may be used and placed at the 6' mark directly behind the regular pitching rubber. Rules for the pitching screen must be followed.

**7.8** A foul tip must be above the batter's head to be recorded as an out.

#### **Section VIII: Mercy Rule:**

**8.1** When a team is ahead by (15) fifteen or more runs after (5) five innings have been completed or four- and one-half innings with the home team ahead by 15 or more runs the game is declared a completed regulation game. Each subsequent inning beyond 5 must be a completed inning, and the home team must bat, for the game to be declared a completed game under Mercy rule 8.1.

**Note: There is no Flip-Flop rule in the Sun and Fun.**

#### **Section X: Scoring Runs:**

**10.1** A team is allowed a maximum of 5 runs per inning plus a 6<sup>th</sup> run on a home run over the fence.

**10.2** A team is allowed to catch up but not surpass their opponents' run total when they are behind by 6 or more runs, except in the eighth inning as described in (10.4).

**10.3** There is no limit on home runs over the fence.

**10.4** In the last inning and extra innings, there is no limit to the number of runs that can be scored by either team.

#### **Section XI: Game lineup Sheets:**

**11.1** Each manager must present a detailed lineup sheet to the other before the game time which must include the player's full name, number, and position being played. The list must also include all substitutions by name and number.

**Updated and revised, July 1, 2024**

**Jim Milligan, Secretary-Treasurer**

