



GIG HARBOR COMMUNITY SOFTBALL LEAGUE

RULES AND POLICIES MANUAL

Summer 2018



**Competitive and Recreational
Divisions**

Last Updated May 9, 2018



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GIG HARBOR COMMUNITY SOFTBALL LEAGUE

RULES AND POLICIES

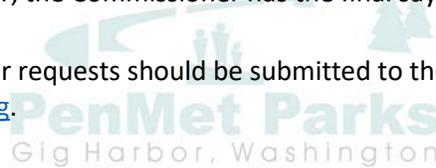
1. OVERVIEW

1.1 THE LEAGUE

- 1.1.1 Gig Harbor Community Softball League (henceforth referred to in this document as the “GHCSL” or the “League”) is a slow-pitch, community-based, softball league playing modified ASA/USA Softball rules.
- 1.1.2 The League is a great opportunity to meet new people where sportsmanship is emphasized and competition is friendly. It is a premier summer sporting activity for the Gig Harbor area.
- 1.1.3 The League is governed by rules found in this document.
- 1.1.4 The League will use official ASA/USA Softball rules to cover any topic not specifically outlined in this document.

1.2 THE COMMISSIONER

- 1.2.1 The Commissioner is Jeff Smyth, Sports Recreation Specialist for PenMet Parks.
- 1.2.2 The Commissioner reserves the right to form a competition committee to assist with League decision making. However, the Commissioner has the final say regarding all League rules and interpretations.
- 1.2.3 Questions, suggestions, or requests should be submitted to the Commissioner at: jmyth@penmetparks.org.



1.3 TWO DIVISIONS

- 1.3.1 Competitive: Co-ed, 10-player team, 16-year age limit (unless exception authorized by PenMet). A minimum of two females must play each inning.
- 1.3.2 Recreational: Co-ed, 10-player team, 16-year age limit (unless exception authorized by PenMet). A minimum of 3 females must play each inning.
- 1.3.3 All rules/policies outlined in this document pertain to both divisions unless otherwise noted.

1.4 PLAYERS

- 1.4.1 The Competitive Division requires a minimum of two females fielded during each inning. In this division, if a team can only field one female, that team is penalized an “out” at the bottom of each batting order. That team must also reduce to 8 players in the field. A team that cannot field at least one female forfeits the game.
- 1.4.2 The Recreational Division requires a minimum of three females fielded during each inning. In this division, if a team can only field two females, that team is penalized an “out” at the bottom of each batting order. That team must also reduce to 9 players in the field. A team that cannot field at least two females forfeits the game.

2. SPORTSMANSHIP

2.1 ATTITUDE AND Demeanor

- 2.1.1 League-appointed and team-appointed umpires are to be treated with respect at all times.
- 2.1.2 A League-appointed umpire has the authority to eject any player for rule violations.
- 2.1.3 An ejected player must leave the park for the remainder of the game.
- 2.1.4 Sportsmanship is emphasized in this League. Foul, obscene, or abusive behavior/language will not be tolerated.

2.2 PARK / LEAGUE POLICIES

- 2.2.1 Alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products are strictly prohibited.
- 2.2.2 Seeds are not permitted anywhere near the playing fields.
- 2.2.3 Gum is not permitted on the playing field.

3. GAME DURATION / INNINGS

3.1 GAME LENGTH

- 3.1.1 A standard official game is 7 innings.
- 3.1.2 Game time length is 90 minutes. This limit can be exceeded if field availability is not an issue and there is agreement among managers and the umpire.
- 3.1.3 A new inning shall not be started after 80 minutes from the scheduled start time. (Exception: See 3.1.2.)
- 3.1.4 A minimum of 5 innings must be played to count as an official game.
- 3.1.5 If after the top of a last inning is complete and the home team is winning, then said home team does not require an at-bat for that inning to be considered "complete." This is true for innings 5 through 9 (if they are the last inning played). Less than 5 innings played is not an official game.

3.2 GRACE PERIOD

- 3.2.1 A grace period of up to 10 minutes past the scheduled start time is allowed to prevent a forfeit.
- 3.2.2 A grace period can extend beyond 10 minutes if there is agreement among managers and the umpire. A grace period does NOT change the official scheduled start time.

3.3 RUN LIMITS

- 3.3.1 There is a 7-run limit per team per inning, with the exception of the 7th inning.
- 3.3.2 There is no run limit in the 7th inning.
- 3.3.3 There is no mercy rule.

3.4 EXTRA INNINGS

- 3.4.1 If after 7 innings the game is tied, an 8th inning can be played if both managers agree, and time and field availability permits. Similarly, a 9th inning can be played if the game remains tied after 8 innings. However, if the game remains tied after 9 innings, the game ends in a tie.

3.4.2 The 7-run limit is in effect during extra innings.

3.5 CANCELLATIONS / FOREITS

3.5.1 The umpire has the authority to “call a game” for reasons of weather, darkness, or any situation that could put players, managers, attendees at risk.

3.5.2 The umpire has the authority to “call a game” for reasons of time.

3.5.3 If a team forfeits a game during the regular season, the two teams can instead choose to intermix and scrimmage during the forfeited game’s time slot. Forfeited games will not be rescheduled or made-up.

3.5.4 The Commissioner is to be notified of game cancellations. The Commissioner will relay the cancellation to applicable managers and the managers to their players.

3.5.5 If weather conditions worsen as game time approaches, the umpire may decide to cancel the game at the field. If this happens, managers should contact the Commissioner to report the cancellation.

3.5.6 Cancelled games may be rescheduled based on field availability. Contact the Commissioner.

4. TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 HOME TEAM

4.1.1 Home team is to provide a first-aid kit for emergencies.

4.1.2 Home team provides the official scorekeeper for the game and coordinates with the visiting team scorekeeper on a regular basis.

4.1.3 Home team is responsible for supplying a new 12-inch ball and a suitable 11-inch ball before each game.

4.2 VISITING TEAM

4.2.1 Visiting team should be ready with a backup scorekeeper in the event the home team cannot perform this duty. In such situations, the visiting team becomes the official scorekeeper.

4.2.2 The umpire reserves the right to reassign official scorekeeping to the visiting team if the umpire determines the home team lacks the necessary tools/skills to perform this task.

4.3 REPORTING SCORES

4.3.1 The winning team is responsible for reporting the score before leaving the field. Submit scores to the Commissioner’s email address. (See 1.2.3.)

5. GAME EQUIPMENT

5.1 FOOTWEAR

5.1.1 Shoes must be worn by all participants.

5.1.2 Metal cleats are not allowed.

5.1.3 A player will be ejected if caught wearing metal cleats after being warned by the umpire.

5.2 BATS

5.2.1 Swing what you bring. Exception: “hot” or “rolled” bats are **not** allowed.

5.3 SOFTBALLS

5.3.1 Only League-provided softballs are allowed.

5.3.2 Males use the 12-inch ball.

5.3.3 Females use the 11-inch ball. (Females preferring to hit the 12-inch ball may do so.)

5.4 STRIKE-ZONE MAT

5.4.1 Teams are to use a strike-zone mat provided by PenMet. However, if an official mat is not available, the mat is 18 inches deep from the point of the plate and 21 inches wide.

6. PITCHING

6.1 PRIOR TO PITCHING

6.1.1 The pitcher must take a position with both feet firmly on the ground and with one or both feet in contact with the pitcher plate.

6.1.2 The pitcher must come to a full and complete stop with the ball in front of the body.

6.1.3 The front of the body must face the batter. This position must be maintained at least one second before starting the delivery.

6.1.4 Any infraction will result in a dead ball being called, an illegal pitch ruled, and a ball added to the batter's count

6.1.5 The correct pitcher plate is located at the back of the pitching circle.

6.2 DELIVERY OF PITCH

6.2.1 The pitch starts when the pitcher makes any motion with the ball that is part of the delivery after the required stop.

6.2.2 The delivery is a continuous motion. The pitcher must not use a delivery in which there is a stop or reversal of the pitching motion.

6.2.3 The pitcher must deliver the ball toward home plate on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip with an underhand motion. The palm of the hand can be over or under the ball.

6.2.4 The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the pitched ball leaves the hand. If a step is taken, it can be forward, backward, or to the side, provided the pivot foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate and the step is simultaneous (or after) the release of the ball.

6.2.5 The ball must be delivered with a perceptible arc and reach a height of at least 6 feet from the ground, while not exceeding a maximum height of 12 feet from the ground.

6.2.6 The pitcher shall not pitch the ball behind the back or through the legs.

6.2.7 The pitcher shall not deliver a pitch from the glove.

- 6.2.8 The pitcher shall not attempt a quick-return pitch before the batter has taken a position in the batter's box or when the batter is off balance as a result of a previous pitch.
- 6.2.9 Any pitch infraction is an illegal pitch. The umpire will signal an illegal pitch and a "ball" will be added to the batter's count.
- 6.2.10 If an illegal pitch is called but the batter swings at the pitch (whether or not contact with the ball is made) the illegal-pitch call is nullified and play continues.

7. STRIKE ZONE

- 7.1 A strike is when the ball lands anywhere on home plate or the strike-zone mat.
- 7.2 A strike is when the ball lands such that the ball's point of contact with the ground is within two inches from an edge of home plate or the strike-zone mat.

8. ROSTER / BATTING

- 8.1 Prior to the game, managers must exchange their official rosters of available/eligible players.
- 8.2 All active players must be included in the batting order.
- 8.3 If a qualified player arrives late, the player can be added to the end of the official line-up without penalty. However, the opposing team must be notified.
- 8.4 Batters begin with a 1 ball, 1 strike count.
- 8.5 Bunting or deliberately chopping the ball downward is not allowed. Either of these infractions will result in a penalty — if a fair ball, the batter is out; if a foul ball, a full strike will be added to the batter's count.
- 8.6 Batters will be called out if they step across home plate while the pitcher is in pitching position.
- 8.7 Batters are allowed to hit one foul ball after they have two strikes. A second foul ball, with a two-strike count, will result in the batter striking out.
- 8.8 Homeruns are progressive. A team is allowed one homerun before their opponent scores a homerun. Subsequent homeruns by said team will be recorded as "outs" — until their opponent scores a homerun, at which point the homerun counter begins again.
- 8.9 Only the on-deck batter and the base coaches are allowed to be outside of the dug-out (in foul territory) during play.

9. BASE RUNNING

- 9.1 Runners cannot “lead off.” Runners must stay on their base until the ball is struck. If a runner leaves the base prior to the ball being struck, the runner is out. (This penalty is not in effect when a batter swings and misses.)
- 9.2 On the initial run to first base, a batter-runner must run to and touch the orange safety base.
- 9.3 A batter-runner will be called out if the safety base is not used. This is not an appeal play by the defense. Exception: A batter-runner can switch to and run across the standard white (inner) base to avoid a collision with a fielder.
- 9.4 A batter-runner is to use the standard white base if the play is not at first base and the batter-runner’s intent is to turn the corner and run toward second base. In this situation, because the play is not at first base, the fielder must stay clear of first base and the batter-runner’s path.
- 9.5 If base runners use the safety base any time after the initial run to first base, they will be considered in foul territory and in jeopardy of being put-out (tagged) by the defense.
- 9.6 When crossing home, a runner may touch either home plate or the strike-zone mat to score. Both are legal. However, if the play is at home, a runner is encouraged to run or slide across the strike-zone mat to avoid potential collision with a defender.

10. OFFENSIVE INTERFERENCE

- 10.1 Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member that impedes, hinders or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Interference may be in the form of physical contact, verbal distraction, visual distraction, or any type of distraction that hinders a fielder in the execution of a play. Defensive players must be given the opportunity to field the ball anywhere on the playing field or throw the ball without being hindered.
- 10.2 In an effort to protect a defensive player attempting to make a play, runners must avoid hitting the defender by sliding, moving right or left, returning to the previous base touched, or any other means necessary to prevent a collision.
- 10.3 If a batted ball hits a runner before a defender is allowed to field the ball, the runner will be called out. The batter will be awarded first base (provided the out was not the third).

11. COURTESY RUNNERS

11.1 INJURED PLAYERS

- 11.1.1 An injured player may be removed from the line-up without penalty. If the injured player is a female, the requirements for fielding the minimum number of females remains in effect.

11.2 COURTESY RUNNERS

- 11.2.1 Prior to the start of the game (at line-up exchange) managers must notify each other which players require a courtesy runner. This will be noted on the line-up card of the official scorer. These runners must use the courtesy runner each time they safely reach first base. There is no penalty for these predetermined courtesy runners.
- 11.2.2 A courtesy runner is to be used for a player that is injured and cannot successfully negotiate the bases without possibility of further injury. Time must be called before the courtesy runner can enter the game. The courtesy runner will be the last player that recorded an out, regardless of gender.
- 11.2.3 If no outs have been recorded, the courtesy runner will be the player who is not on base and is furthest from batting next. If that player is also injured, the next furthest player is used. And so forth.

12. FIELDING / DEFENSE**12.1 ENCROACHMENT**

- 12.1.1 Outfielders must remain beyond the encroachment line until a ball is struck. The line is defined by a 45-foot arc as measured from 1st, 2nd, and 3rd bases.
- 12.1.2 Two cones, one each on the two baselines, provide reference points for the outfielders.

12.2 INFIELD FLY RULE

- 12.2.1 A pop-up fielded by an infielder with ordinary effort (less than two outs, runners on first and second, or first, second and third) is an automatic out. The umpire will call "batter out," and the play immediately ends.
- 12.2.2 Runners cannot tag up and advance, nor can they be called out for being off their base.
- 12.2.3 A pop-up does not have to be over the infield to be an infield fly.
- 12.2.4 A pop-up must be in fair territory for an infield fly to be called.

12.3 OBSTRUCTION

- 12.3.1 Obstruction is the act of a fielder not in possession of the ball, or not in the act of fielding a batted ball, which impedes the progress of a batter-runner who is legally running the bases.

12.4 FAKE TAG

- 12.4.1 A fake tag is an obstruction. The obstructed runner, and each runner affected by the obstruction, will be awarded base(s) that, in the judgment of the umpire, runner(s) would have reached had the obstruction not occurred.

12.5 DEAD-BALL SITUATIONS

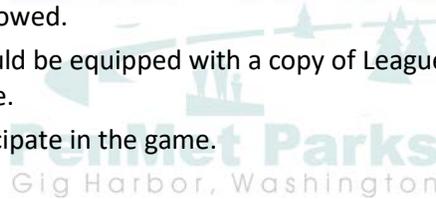
- 12.5.1 A dead-ball overthrow occurs when a ball is in play and is overthrown into dead-ball territory (beyond the boundary lines). Runners advance two bases from where they were when the ball left the hand of the fielder who threw the ball.

- 12.5.2 When a fielder loses possession of the ball, such as during an attempted tag, and the ball enters the dead-ball area or becomes blocked, each runner is awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the ball entered the dead-ball area.
- 12.5.3 When a ball becomes dead, runners may return to touch a missed base or a base left too soon. A runner shall not be declared out if a fielder deliberately carries or throws the ball into dead ball territory to prevent that runner from returning to a missed base or a base left too soon.
- 12.5.4 Once a runner has entered dead ball territory, they cannot return to touch a missed base or a base left too soon.
- 12.5.5 If the ball becomes blocked due to offensive equipment not involved in the game, the ball is ruled dead and runners return to the last base touched at the time of the blocked ball. If the blocked ball prevented the defense from making an out, the runner being played on is called out.

13. OFFICIATING

13.1 UMPIRES

- 13.1.1 Whenever possible, PenMet provides official League umpires. However, if a League umpire is not available, teams are responsible for umpiring their own games and ensuring all League policies and rules are followed.
- 13.1.2 At games, managers should be equipped with a copy of League rules in the event there is no League-appointed umpire.
- 13.1.3 Player-umpires can participate in the game.

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13.2 DISPUTES

- 13.2.1 If a dispute arises, the game is halted, the umpire makes a final decision and play resumes.
- 13.2.2 An umpire cannot reverse a call once the next pitch occurs.
- 13.2.3 Disputes are discussed between managers and umpires — not players.
- 13.2.4 No games shall be played under official protest. All disputes are resolved immediately.
- 13.2.5 Rules in question and not addressed in this document can be brought to the attention of the League Commissioner.

13.3 TIME CALLED

- 13.3.1 Players or managers can request that time be called but only an umpire can call time. The umpire should signal and verbally call time at the conclusion of each play. It is the umpire's discretion as to when the play is over.
- 13.3.2 An umpire need not call time when there is a walk, a strike out, a foul ball or when there are no runners on base.

14. TOURNAMENT

14.1 TEAM ELIGIBILITY

- 14.1.1 Standings will be determined by team win-loss records.
- 14.1.2 If two or more teams are tied at the end of the regular season, team standings will be determined using the following methods: (1) Head-to-head record. (2) Lowest regular season runs allowed. (3) Coin Toss

14.2 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- 14.2.1 Players must be on the official team roster (as submitted to the Commissioner).
- 14.2.2 A player must have participated in at least half the team's regular season games. Any exception must be granted by the Commissioner.
- 14.2.3 Team rosters will be reviewed before tournament play. Players not on the team's official roster will be disqualified from the tournament and the offending team will risk forfeit of the game.

14.3 BREAKING A TIE

- 14.3.1 Game length is 7 innings.
- 14.3.2 The 7-run limit — same rules as regular season games.
- 14.3.3 If a game is tied after 7 innings, the game will continue until a winner is decided.
- 14.3.4 Due to weather, injury, or emergency, tournament games can be delayed for up to 90 minutes. After 90 minutes, and if 5 innings have been played, the game will be considered complete.
- 14.3.5 If less than 5 innings are played, the game will resume with the same scenario at the earliest possible make-up day. Lineups will remain the same — if not, auto-outs will occur for each player not present at the make-up.

14.4 DISPUTES

- 14.4.1 Play is suspended and managers will confer with umpires, away from dugouts and players.
- 14.4.2 If deemed necessary, the umpire may call the Commissioner to determine a judgment.
- 14.4.3 If a player eligibility protest is lodged during the Tournament and cannot be resolved at the time of the protest, the game shall be completed. If it is subsequently found that the involved player(s) were ineligible, the team in violation shall forfeit the game and a loss will be recorded in the standings.

-End-