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2017-2018 NCSA
RULES & REGULATIONS

NOTE: The National Club Softball Association follows the NCAA Div 1 rules of play with the following exceptions listed below.

1.00.00 (Conference Play)

1.01.0 All NCSA conference play will be broken up into 3-game series.

1.02.0 NCSA teams in conferences made up of three or fewer teams will play both a home 3-game series and an away 3-game series against each conference opponent during a single NCSA season.

1.03.0 NCSA teams in conferences made up of four or more teams will play either a home 3-game series or an away 3-game series (but not both) against each conference opponent during a single NCSA season.

1.03.1 NCSA teams in conferences made up of four or more teams will alternate their home and away 3-game series with each conference opponent from one NCSA season to the next.

1.03.2 Example: If Virginia Tech plays a 3-game series at Radford during the 2007 NCSA season, Radford will play a 3-game series at Virginia Tech during the 2008 NCSA season.

1.04.0 All NCSA teams are welcome and encouraged to supplement their conference schedule with non-conference games against: NCSA Member Club Softball Teams, Non-NCSA Collegiate Club Softball Teams, and any other Collegiate Softball Team.

1.05.0 Rain Outs/Weather Postponement

1.05.1 In the event that an NCSA conference game(s) would be rained out and/or postponed due to weather, the teams have until midnight Thursday of the week following the week that the game(s) were originally scheduled to be played to mutually agree upon a make-up date and submit it to their Regional Director for approval.

1.05.2 Should the teams fail to mutually agree upon the make-up date, the Regional Director will officially set the make-up date at his/her discretion.

2.00.00 (Determining Conference Standing)

2.01.0 For a team to be eligible to win their conference, the total number of conference games they played must equal or exceed 75% of the average number of conference games played by all teams in their conference including forfeits.

2.02.0 The first criterion for determining conference standing is conference-winning percentage.

2.03.0 The first tiebreaker for determining conference standing is conference game head to head results.

2.04.0 The next tiebreaker for determining conference standing is conference game results versus the next best conference team.

2.05.0 The next tiebreaker for determining conference standing is the lower average of runs allowed per conference game played excluding forfeits.

2.06.0 The final tiebreaker for determining conference standing is a coin toss.

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3.00.00 (Postseason)

3.01.0 Regional Playoffs:

3.01.1 Regions comprised of 3 or 4 conferences will have a Regional Tournament at the conclusion of the regular season.

3.01.2 The conference champions from each of the conferences within the region will participate in the Regional Tournament.

3.01.2.1 In Regions comprised of 3 conferences, the NCSA will select one Regional At-Large Bid to also compete with the Conference Champions in the Regional Playoffs.

3.01.3 The Regional Tournament will be a straight 4 team double elimination format.

3.01.4 The top two teams to finish in the Regional Tournament will receive automatic bids to the NCSA World Series.

3.02.0 World Series Seeding:

3.02.1 Regional Champions and Conference Champions without a Regional Playoff will be seeded first, then Regional Runner-Ups, then At-Large Bids seeded last based on the discretion of the NCSA.

3.02.2 If there are two teams within the same conference who are seeded in the same pool, it is at the discretion of the NCSA to rearrange pool play seeding to alleviate those two teams from competing against each other in pool play.

4.00.00 (Game Length)

4.01.0 NCSA Spring Training Showcase

4.01.1 All **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Games** played at the NCSA Spring Training Showcase will be played in a 7-inning format.

4.01.2 Mercy Rule 4.09.0 will remain in effect during all NCSA Spring Training Showcase games.

4.01.3 Slaughter Rule 4.10.0 will NOT be in effect during any NCSA Spring Training Showcase games.

4.02.0 Regular Season

4.02.1 All regular season **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Games** will be played in a 7-inning format.

4.02.2 Mercy Rule 4.09.0 will remain in effect during all regular season **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Games**.

4.02.3 Slaughter Rule 4.10.0 will remain in effect during all regular season **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Games**.

4.03.0 Regional Playoffs

4.03.1 All NCSA Regional Playoff post-season games will be played in a 7-inning format.

4.03.2 Mercy Rule 4.09.0 will remain in effect during all NCSA Regional Playoff post-season games.

4.03.3 Slaughter Rule 4.10.0 will NOT be in effect during any NCSA Regional Playoff post-season games.

4.03.4 A HALTED GAME RULE will be in effect during NCSA Regional Playoff post-season play.

4.03.4.1 A Regional Playoff game that has been stopped at any time after its start because of inclement weather, darkness, light failure or curfew will be continued at the next available opportunity as set forth by the Regional Director.

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4.03.4.2 A halted game must resume play at exactly the point of being halted, with the lineups and batting orders of both teams exactly the same, subject to the rules of substitution; any player (or pitcher) who played, or was announced as a substitute before the game was halted, must be in the lineup when play resumes or be ineligible for the remainder of the game.

4.03.4.3 A halted game when resumed will be played to its completion.

4.04.0 National Championship World Series

4.04.1 All NCSA World Series post-season games will be played in a 7-inning format.

4.04.2 Mercy Rule 4.09.0 will remain in effect during all NCSA World Series post-season games.

4.04.3 Slaughter Rule 4.10.0 will NOT be in effect during any NCSA World Series post-season games.

4.04.4 A HALTED GAME RULE will be in effect during National Championship World Series play.

4.04.4.1 A World Series game that has been stopped at any time after its start because of inclement weather, darkness, light failure or curfew will be continued at the next available opportunity as set forth by the National Championship Tournament Director.

4.04.4.2 A halted game must resume play at exactly the point of being halted, with the lineups and batting orders of both teams exactly the same, subject to the rules of substitution; any player (or pitcher) who played, or was announced as a substitute before the game was halted, must be in the lineup when play resumes or be ineligible for the remainder of the game.

4.04.4.3 A halted game when resumed will be played to its completion.

4.05.0 All games with the score tied at the end of seven innings will continue into extra innings until a winner is declared. The following tiebreaker will be used when games continue into extra innings:

4.05.1 Starting with the top of the 8th inning and each half-inning to follow, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player scheduled to bat ninth in that half inning being placed on second base (e.g., if the No. 5 batter is the lead-off batter, the No. 4 batter in the batting order will be placed on second base). A substitute may be inserted for the runner.

4.05.2 If the game is still tied when the official declares the game must be stopped due to weather or darkness, the game remains tied until the game can be completed at a future date.

4.06.0 If a team is winning at the end of five or more full innings and the official declares the game must be stopped due to weather or darkness, the team that is ahead at the end of the last completed inning is declared the winner.

4.07.0 If the score is tied at the end of five or more full innings and the official declares the game must be stopped due to weather or darkness, the game remains tied until the game can be resumed at a future date.

4.08.0 If five full innings have not been played when the official declares the game must be stopped due to weather or darkness, the game is ruled void and will be made up at a later date. Stats from this game will not count and should not be submitted to the league.

4.09.0 Mercy Rule: If a team is up by ten or more runs at the end of five or more full innings, that team is declared the winner, and play must be stopped.

4.10.0 Slaughter Rule: If a team is up by 15 or more runs at the end of 3 or more full innings, that team is declared the winner, and play must be stopped.

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5.00.00 (Roster Size)

5.01.0 The official roster submitted to the NCSA is limited to no more than 25 players.

5.02.0 The 25 players listed on the roster are the ONLY players allowed to compete in any **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game**.

5.02.1 Any team found playing a player (in an **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game**) not on the current official roster will be issued a forfeit for all games that the above-mentioned player has competed in.

5.02.2 Any team found playing any **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game** with less than nine players on their eligible roster will AUTOMATICALLY be forced to forfeit any victories achieved while having no eligible roster.

5.02.2.1 Additionally the team is AUTOMATICALLY placed on probation.

5.02.2.2 Player statistics for both teams of a game forfeited due to a participating team having less than nine players on their eligible roster DO NOT count.

5.02.2.3 In the event that an **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game** is played with neither team having at least nine players on their eligible roster, then the game itself and the player statistics from that game DO NOT count and both teams are AUTOMATICALLY placed on probation.

5.03.0 Each player, coach and manager on the roster MUST have a signed liability waiver on file with the NCSA.

5.04.0 Each team is allowed to add players to their roster at any time up until and including April 1. Once the team's roster has grown to 25 players, no more players may be added.

5.04.1 In a single NCSA season, no more than 8 players can be removed from a team's official NCSA roster.

5.04.2 Players can be removed for any reason – To remove a player, the team will need to submit a signed letter from the Club Sports Director and two team officers, listing the name(s) of the player(s) to be removed.

5.04.3 Those players being removed from the roster can only be removed between February 21st and February 28th inclusively.

5.05.0 Players are not deemed eligible to participate in any **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game** until their paperwork has been processed with the league. When the player appears on the team's roster, which is available on the Official NCSA Website (www.clubsoftball.org), then that player is then eligible to compete in **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Games**.

6.00.00 (Eligibility)

6.01.0 Players are not deemed eligible to participate in any **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game** until their paperwork has been processed with the league. When the player appears on the team's roster, which is available on the Official NCSA Website (www.clubsoftball.org), then that player is then eligible to compete in **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Games**.

6.02.0 Any team found playing an ineligible player will be penalized by forfeiting all games that that ineligible player participated in while holding an ineligible status.

6.03.0 All players playing in an **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game** MUST be a member of the Institution, which that team represents. An example is that no member of the University of Texas may play for the Texas A&M Softball Club.

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6.03.1 Students from a school's Satellite campus ARE eligible to participate on the main campus's club softball team, given that the satellite campus does not have its own NCSA sanctioned softball team.

6.04.0 A player with any previous professional experience in the sport of softball IS eligible to play in any **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game**.

6.05.0 Faculty members are NOT eligible to play in any **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game**.

6.06.0 Males are NOT eligible to play in any **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game.**

6.07.0 A player playing in an **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game** MUST hold **Full-Time Status** with that team's College or University.

6.07.1 An exception is if a Final Semester Student requires less than a Full-Time load in order to graduate.

6.07.2 An exception is if a rostered player graduates at the conclusion of the fall or winter semester; that player will remain on the roster and is eligible to compete for the remainder of that NCSA season.

7.00.00 (Academic Eligibility)

7.01.0 At the time of any roster submission, a letter from the academic institution must be submitted to the NCSA listing that each player holds a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA and is not on academic warning or probation.

8.00.00 (Uniforms)

8.01.0 Players Uniform

8.01.1 The NCSA will adhere to NCAA requirements regarding player's uniforms excluding the following exceptions.

8.01.1.1 It is **NOT** required that each team have **TWO** sets of uniform jerseys of contrasting colors.

8.01.1.2 It is **NOT** required that each team have matching outerwear/foul-weather gear.

8.02.0 It is the responsibility of the visiting team to wear a contrasting uniform color to the jersey worn by the home team ONLY if a contrasting uniform color is available.

9.00.00 (Bats)

9.01.0 The NCSA will follow ASA/USA (Not NCAA) Bat Rules when determining which bats are legal for use.

9.01.1 See http://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/play-usa-softball/certified-usa-softball-equipment for the most up to date ASA/USA non-approved bat list.

10.00.00 (Official League Ball)

10.01.0 The MANDATORY official league ball of the NCSA will be the Rawlings/Worth NCSAFP fast-pitch softball featuring the NCSA logo.

10.02.0 During **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Games**, the home team shall be responsible for providing a minimum of three official league softballs. Each game shall begin with one new game ball (rubbed by the umpire, so the manufacturer's gloss is removed) and two additional (new or game quality) balls.

10.03.0 Any game played without the official league ball will result in a forfeit against the home team.

11.00.00 (Medical Personnel)

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11.01.0 While it is not required for the home team to provide on site medical personnel (i.e., trainer or EMT), the home team is required to provide some sort of communications equipment capable of summoning medical personnel in the event of an emergency (i.e., telephone, cell phone, or CB radio).

12.00.00 (Umpires)

12.01.0 During **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Games**, the home team is responsible for providing umpires for each competition.

12.02.0 It is the responsibility of the home team to provide the umpires with a copy of the Official NCSA Rules prior to the start of each game.

12.03.0 The umpires must be High School certified or higher.

12.04.0 It is required that the home team schedules two umpires to officiate each competition.

12.04.1 The game may be played provided that at least one approved umpire is present.

12.05.0 If no umpires have arrived within 30 minutes after the competition is officially scheduled to start, the game is forfeited to the visiting team.

12.06.0 If a second game of double-header is scheduled, the home team has an additional 45 minutes from the time that the first game was declared a forfeit to get NCSA approved umpires to the field or the second game is also forfeited to the visiting team.

13.00.00 (Courtesy Runners)

13.01.0 A courtesy runner may be used to run for the pitcher and/or catcher with any number of outs in the inning.

13.01.1 A player is only designated as the pitcher if she threw the final pitch of the previous inning or is scheduled to pitch in the bottom of the first inning.

13.01.2 A player is only designated as the catcher if she was playing the position of catcher for the final pitch of the previous inning or is scheduled to catch in the bottom of the first inning.

13.02.0 A player is only eligible to courtesy run if she has not previously played in the game in an official capacity.

13.02.1 An exemption to this is if the offensive team only has 9 or fewer non-injured players remaining in the dugout. If this is the case, then the last player out may courtesy run.

13.03.0 No one player is permitted to courtesy run for both the pitcher and catcher in the same inning.

13.04.0 A courtesy runner is allowed to courtesy run more than once in the same inning if the player she ran for previously that inning reaches base multiple times that inning. (For example if a player runs for the catcher in an inning, that player is not eligible to run for the pitcher in that same inning. That player is eligible to run for the catcher if she reaches base again that inning.)

14.00.00 (Tobacco/Drug Use)

14.01.0 Tobacco Use

14.01.1 Tobacco use is NOT permitted during **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Games**, either on the field or in the dugout.

14.02.0 Drug Use

14.02.1 By signing the liability waiver each player agrees that the use of drugs, alcohol, or any other substances that could cause danger or detrimental effects upon the

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participant's performance as a member of this organization is strictly prohibited during NCSA Sanctioned Competition.

14.02.2 Random drug testing will not occur at any point during the NCSA sanctioned season.

15.00.00 (Ejections)

15.01.0 In the event that a player or coach should be ejected from an **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game**, it is required that team's primary representative complete an NCSA Ejection Report and submit it via email to both the appropriate Conference Coordinator and NCSA Commissioner.

15.01.1 The team's primary representative has 72 hours from the time of the ejection to complete and submit the Ejection Report.

15.01.2 If a team fails to report an ejection within 72 hours of the ejection, the team is automatically placed on probation for the remainder of the season.

15.01.3 Upon reviewing the Ejection Report, the NCSA may determine that a further suspension is necessary.

15.01.4 The player or coach is not automatically required to sit out an additional game unless the ejection was the result of an incident involving fighting.

15.02.0 In the event that a player or coach should be ejected from an **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game** for fighting, the ejected player or coach will be suspended indefinitely until the NCSA Commissioner can review the Ejection Report and perform a full investigation into the altercation.

16.00.00 (Forfeitures)

16.01.0 In the event that a visiting team should forfeit any **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game** to the home team; the visiting team is required to inform the home team and their Regional Director via telephone of their intent not to play at least 48 hours in advance of the predetermined start of the first game.

16.02.0 Should the visiting team not provide the home team with 48 hours notice in advance of the predetermined start of the first game to cancel umpires and/or field rentals for the game(s) in question, the visiting team assumes financial responsibility for the payment of those umpires and/or field rentals should any cancellation fees be incurred.

16.03.0 In the event that a home team should forfeit any **NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game** to the visiting team; the home team is required to inform the visiting team and their Regional Director via telephone of their intent not to play at least 48 hours in advance of the predetermined start of the first game.

16.04.0 Should the home team not provide the visiting team with 48 hours notice in advance of the predetermined start of the first game to cancel their transportation and/or lodging arrangements for the game(s) in question, the home team assumes financial responsibility for the payment of those transportation and/or lodging costs should any cancellation fees be incurred.

16.05.0 Effective July 1st, 2015 a $150 performance bond will be added to the NCSA Annual Dues.

16.05.1 For every UNPLAYED CONFERENCE game that is forfeited, $50 is deducted from the team's performance bond and that money is used to supplement the regional playoff budget of the region that the team is affiliated with.

16.05.1.1 This performance bond penalty does not apply to non-conference games or forfeited conference games that were PLAYED.

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16.05.1.2 Since the performance bond is $150 a team can lose no more than $150 through forfeits in a single season.

16.05.2 At the end of the NCSA season, each team will have the option to have the remainder of their performance bond returned to them or have it roll over to the next season.

17.00.00 (Protests)

17.01.0 No protest ever shall be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire.

17.02.0 On Field Protests

17.02.1 On Field Protests consists of protests regarding Uniform Violations, Equipment Violations, Umpire decisions believed to be in violation of NCSA rules, Umpire qualifications, and ALL Roster Violations.

17.02.2 Any On Field protest by the coach of a competing team must be made at the time of the action or incident that caused the protest and before play is resumed.

17.02.2.1 If the game ends (legal contest) in a protest able situation, the offended team has until all fielders have left fair territory to voice its protest intentions.

17.02.2.2 All On Field protests must be made to the umpire-in chief.

17.02.2.3 All On Field protests must be reported to the NCSA (via the NCSA GAME PROTEST FORM) no later than midnight E.S.T. of the Tuesday following the "NCSA Week" in which the protested game occurred.

17.02.3 When a coach claims that an umpire's decision violates NCSA rules, the umpire-in-chief must: (1) allow the coach the right to file a protest; (2) announce to each coach, to the official scorer and to the public-address announcer that the game is being played under protest, and (3) note and record the game situation at the time of the protest. No replay of any part of a game will be allowed even if the protest is proven to be legitimate, if the play in question did not directly affect the outcome of the game. If the protest is proven to be legitimate and could have had a bearing upon the game, then it is upheld and play resumes from the point of the protest.

17.03.0 Off Field Protests

17.03.1 Off Field Protests consist of protests regarding Failure to secure fields and Failure to schedule qualified umpires.

17.04.0 All Off Field protests must be reported to the NCSA (via the NCSA GAME PROTEST FORM) no later than midnight E.S.T. of the Tuesday following the "NCSA Week" in which the protested game occurred.

18.00.00 (Team Probation/Expulsion)

18.01.0 A team can be placed on probation if they forfeit 3 or more NCSA scheduled conference games in a single season or if they conduct the softball operations of their team in a manner not considered acceptable by NCSA standards.

18.02.0 By signing the NCSA LPA (League Participation Agreement) the team is not only contractually agreeing to participate in the NCSA, but also to compete in the post season should they qualify (At Large Bids Excluded).

18.02.1 Should a team qualify for the post season and fail to participate, they will AUTOMATICALLY be placed on probation for a minimum of 1 full season.

18.02.1.1 During the first season on probation, the team will be post season eligible but will be At-Large Bid ineligible.

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18.02.1.2 An exemption is if a team provides proof prior to April 15th, that final exams are held during postseason play, thus prohibiting them from participating.

18.03.0 A team can be expelled from the league if they forfeit 2 or more NCSA scheduled conference games or if they conduct the softball operations of their team in a manner not considered acceptable by NCSA standards during a probationary season.

18.04.0 Probations and Expulsions are not automatic and are evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the NCSA.

18.05.0 A team placed on probation will NOT be eligible for the early payment discount off the annual dues.

Definitions:

Any softball game featuring one or more teams holding membership in the National Club Softball Association can be classified in to one of three categories: "**Off Season Softball Game**", "**Exhibition Softball Game**", and "**NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game**".

"**Off Season Softball Game**" is defined as any softball game featuring one or more teams holding membership in the NCSA, which takes place between June 1st and September 14th inclusively. "**Off Season Softball Games**" are not sanctioned by the NCSA.

"**Exhibition Softball Game**" is defined as a softball game featuring one or more teams holding membership in the NCSA, which is played for the purpose of practice and training rather than for competition. An "**Exhibition Softball Game**" may take place between September 15th and May 31st inclusively. For a softball game to be deemed "**Exhibition**", it must be declared in writing by the participating teams holding membership in the NCSA to their respective Conference Coordinators no less than 48 hours before the scheduled start time. "**Exhibition Softball Games**" are not sanctioned by the NCSA.

"**NCSA Sanctioned Softball Game**" is defined as any and all softball games featuring one or more teams holding membership in the NCSA, which is played for the purpose of competition, and takes place between September 15th and May 31st inclusively. Scores, Results, and Statistics from "**NCSA Sanctioned Softball Games**" are recorded and tabulated.

"**Full-Time Status**" is defined as a minimum 12.0 Credit Hours for Undergraduate students at 4 Year Colleges/Universities and 9.0 Credit Hours for Undergraduate students at 2 Year Colleges. For Graduate students, there is no definitive number of Credit Hours required to be considered Full-Time as long as the player is considered Full-Time in the eyes of the Institution that he represents.

"**Final Semester Student**" is defined as a student who will be graduating at the end of the spring semester.

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