

SUN CITY GRAND SOFTBALL CLUB RULES

Revised and Approved by the Softball Club Board of Directors

11/19/2021, 10/14/2021, 3/9/2021, 12/15/2020, 10/29/19, 3/19/19, 11/20/15, 9/25/15, 5/29/15, 4/24/15, 3/27/15, 8/29/14, 9/20/13, 9/8/13

Preamble: Club Charter By-Laws, Article 1. Section B. "To promote slow pitch softball for exercise and recreation in an athletic environment designed to sustain a high level of fellowship, sportsmanship and friendly competition." All Sun City Grand residents are eligible to join our Club. Non Playing Club members (Associate members) are encouraged to volunteer for a variety of positions that are available: Score keepers, Umpires, Committee members, Maintenance, Managers, Coaches, Commissioners and Board Members. All members and applicants, when requested, must show their valid CAM card.

The SCG Softball Club uses the Senior Softball-USA Rules (SS-USA), as they apply to senior slow pitch softball. The Senior Softball-USA (SS-USA) rules apply to all our Leagues, unless amended by one or more of the following rules or League Specific Rules

The Sun City Grand Softball Club fiscal calendar year runs from May 1-April 30 the following year. The Club generally follows a four-season format: Fall League November-January, Winter League February-April, Spring League May-June, and Summer League July-September. The Saturday League parallels each season. The field is closed during the month of October for maintenance. All other tournament or use of the field must be scheduled and approved by the Director of Field Operations Officer of the Club.

References: <https://www.suncitygrand.com/> Senior Softball-USA <https://seniorsoftball.com/www.scgsoftball.org>

For each of the fall and winter seasons, there will be five Leagues as follows:

1. Red (upper and mid-level skill men and women players)
2. White (mid-level skill men and women players)
3. Blue (mid and lower skill level men and women players)
4. Saturday (a combination of all skill levels of men and women players)
5. Women

For the spring and summer seasons, there will be two leagues: a Weekday and a Saturday League comprised of men and woman players with a combination of all skill levels.

The number of teams will be determined by the number of players available, with a minimum of 6 teams in each league during the fall and winter seasons.

A. The Board will decide on the number of teams for all seasons based on the number of players available to play.

B. The Board, in consultation with the League Commissioners, will determine the number of players per team and the number of teams per League based on the numbers of players available.

C. Leagues may adopt "League-specific" rules based on their special needs. These League specific rules will be established as follows:

1. The League Commissioner will present to the Board for approval, all rules for that League, which are based on a vote of the majority of that League's commissioners and managers. These League-specific rules are developed at the pre-draft league commissioner/managers meeting before each new season.
2. League-specific rules apply only to that current season.
3. The Board Secretary will post the League-specific rules on the Club web site for that League. A copy will be posted by the League Commissioner at the field within 72 hours of approval. It is the responsibility of all club members to know the rules for the Club and their assigned League.
4. The Board will approve League-specific rules unless in the opinion of the Board those rules:
 - a. Create an unreasonable risk to players of that league, or
 - b. Negatively affect the integrity of the Club or the game, or
 - c. Violates the General Rules established by the SCG Homeowners Association, or
 - d. Creates a conflict with another league

The League and/or the Club membership may not appeal any rule not approved by the Board for reason C (listed above).

Rule II. ROSTERS

- A. All Players must be rated by the Club's Rating Committee before they are drafted and assigned to a roster or eligible for the sub list.
- B. New players (first time applicants) who have submitted a completed membership application, have paid Club dues and have been rated, prior to the close of League registration shall be eligible for the draft.
- C. After the close of League registration any new players (first time applicants) who have submitted a membership application, have paid Club dues and have been rated will be assigned to a Sub list. At the discretion of the League Commissioner, they may be added to a team roster in the appropriate League according to their rating, to replace a drafted player who cannot play. Returning players who fail to register during the League registration will be placed on the appropriate sub list until an opening appears.
- D. Players failing to appear for 6 or more games will be dropped from the team roster with the approval of the Commissioner(s).
- E. Players who do not inform their manager that they cannot play or do not arrive at the field to play, by the scheduled start time will be dropped from the line-up by the manager for the next scheduled game.
- F. All roster players, dressed in the approved uniform and ready to play, SHALL play both offensive and defensive positions. All players will bat in the line-up rotation. Every player shall play a minimum of 3 innings defensively, however 5 innings would be strongly

recommended, unless the game is called earlier than the 7th inning due to weather or the Mercy rule.

G. All players who are in good standing with the club are eligible to play on a team. All eligible players who sign up by the designated deadline shall be placed on a team. All eligible players may sign up for any League's draft, regardless of their rating. However, they must be drafted by a team manager in that League to play in that League. If not drafted, that player in consultation with the League Commissioner(s) may choose to be added to the sub list for that League or become eligible for the next subsequent draft. Eligible players who miss the registration deadline shall be assigned to the League sub list. They may be added to a team roster to replace a drafted player who cannot play according to their rating and position preference.

H. All Players who are in good standing with the club are eligible to attend League Practices. Players will attend only the practice that is scheduled for the league they are playing in. No exceptions unless approved by the commissioners of both leagues. Any player attending another leagues practice shall be suspended for two games. A second offense and the player will be suspended from practice for the remainder of the session, plus a four-game suspension. Saturday League does not have a league specific practice. Players that only play on Saturday will be assigned a Weekday League specific practice to attend by the Saturday League Commissioner.

I. Any player who quits or resigns from a team after the draft shall be subject to the following:

1. The League Commissioner shall investigate and review the circumstances and make a recommendation to the Board and the player shall be subject to the following disciplinary actions:

- a. Suspension from playing in all leagues, including subbing, for the remainder of the session. In addition, the player will be subject to suspension from all Leagues for one year.

- b. Based on a review of any extenuating circumstances, other action may be taken by the Board and League Commissioner(s).

Rule III. LENGTH OF GAMES

A. Games are scheduled for 7 innings. This Club uses a 60 minute clock on days where 4 or more games are scheduled. The clock is started with the first pitch of the first inning of the game. The Scorekeeper or Field Umpire notifies the Home Plate Umpire that time is about to expire.

1. When time expires, the current inning will be completed and one additional inning with unlimited runs will be played. The Home Plate Umpire will notify the managers that the next inning will be the unlimited last inning.

2. An inning is considered to have ended and the next inning has commenced when the third out in the bottom of the inning is made or the maximum number of runs have scored.

3. Emergency clock stops may be ordered by the umpire(s) for situations on the field, such as injury, the clock will be restarted at the direction of the Home Plate Umpire.

B. An Official game is 5 innings, 4 ½ innings if Home team is ahead.

C. A flip-flop will be used in the final inning where the Visitors team is ahead by 10 or more runs.

D. "Mercy Rule Win finish", is a game where one team is ahead by 12 or more runs at the end of the 5 or 6th inning, 4 ½ or 5 ½ innings if the Home team is ahead.

E. There will be a five-run limit per half inning, save the final inning being unlimited.

F. A game delay due to frost or other field conditions will be at the discretion of the Director of Field Operations or their designee. If a delay is 30 minutes or more, it is recommended that all games that day are limited to 6 innings for that league.

Rule IV. COURTESY RUNNERS

A. In Senior Slow-Pitch Softball, courtesy runners may be used at the request of a player, at any base. Managers or other players should never instruct a player to get a courtesy runner. Managers and players that violate this rule may be subject to unsportsmanlike penalties under Rule XIII Conduct. Players may act as a courtesy runner only once per inning and **three** times per game.

Rule V. PLAYER SUBSTITUTIONS

A. A game may begin or finish with one less player than the minimum number required to start a game. (SS-USA rule) However, if there is an available player in the stands, who is available to play and agrees to play, they should be asked to play.

B. Substitute players will be chosen first from the sub list or bye-team and then from any active roster. Active roster players will only be used if there are no appropriate subs available on the sub list or bye team. In Leagues that use a sub czar, managers are not given a choice of subs, but will be assigned one by the sub czar.

C. Players on active rosters and/or on the sub list may only play a maximum of three games a week per league. All players are limited to substituting for the same team, twice a season. Players who violate the above rule shall be suspended from substituting for the next two (2) weeks in which games are scheduled. Managers who violate this rule face forfeiture of the game.

D. League Commissioners will develop the criteria for grouping of substitute players. Some leagues will find it necessary to use strictly ratings while others will need to establish groups within a range of ratings to suit the needs of their specific league. Regardless of the system used, if there is no sub of an equal rating or group available, a manager (with the opposing

managers agreement) has the option to use a player with a higher rating as a catcher or pitcher who will not bat. If there is no agreement the team will play short.

E. If a player who is expected to play fails to arrive at the field by game start and it does not put the roster below 'one less the official lineup' (see Rule V. A.), the team will play without that player and has the option of using an appropriate substitute player. If the player arrives before the end of the first inning, the player will be allowed to play.

F. Substitutes may bat in any position in the batting order.

G. A maximum of five (5) substitutes can be used by a single team in one game. If more than 5 substitutions are required to start a game, the game will be forfeited and will be played as a scrimmage/practice game.

H. If both the roster player and the substitute player arrive for the game, the roster player will not be permitted to play.

Rule VI. UMPIRES

A. Two umpires are to be assigned per game. If a player is unable to fulfill their duty, it is the player's responsibility to follow the League rule on finding a replacement. The manager will report missing an assignment to the League Commissioner. If the Commissioner finds no valid reason for the missed duty the player will:

- Receive a one game suspension
- Repetitive violations shall be cause for suspension from the Club

B. One umpire may work the game if no other umpires are available. One umpire may request the assistance of the other umpire. Only umpires may call out rulings; out, safe, foul ball, infield fly, time out, etc. Umpires have the authority to conduct the game according to Club, League and SS-USA rules. Umpires should use loud verbal and obvious hand and arm signals to announce their rulings. Umpires may ask to be replaced during a game. Umpires have the authority to warn or eject members as necessary. Ejections will be documented by the League Commissioner.

Rule VII. CANCELLATIONS

A. Commissioners may decide to cancel play due to weather conditions, field conditions, or other reasons. Such cancelled games will not be replayed unless they are scheduled in the last 2 weeks of the season and will affect the Division Championship.

Rule VIII. RUNNING BASES

A. Any runner who deliberately or unintentionally runs into the fielder who is legally covering a base or a defensive player fielding a ball or attempting to field a ball shall automatically be declared out.

B. There will be no sliding permitted going into a base. A runner who slides will be called out. Diving back or sliding back to a base a runner had last occupied or last run through is permissible.

C. In the interest of player safety, a base runner on either first or third base may step off the base a few steps in foul territory to avoid being injured by a “pull hitter’s” batted ball. To advance after a ball is batted, the base runner must return to the base vacated before continuing to the next base. If a ball is caught by a first or third baseman before the runner returns to the base, the runner is deemed to be in a “safe zone” and is not out if tagged returning to the base.

D. A double base consisting of a white portion and a double orange portion is used at first base for added safety in avoiding collisions between the fielder and runner at first base.

Under no circumstances may the baserunner running from home to first base use the white base unless there is no play at first base. Runners the touch the white bag first will be called out. **Under no circumstances** may the first baseman use the orange base at first base. In the event the first baseman uses the orange bag, the baserunner will be awarded second base.

Rule IX. HOME PLATE

A. When a runner is advancing from the commitment line towards the Scoring Line, if the runner’s whole foot, crosses over the Runners diagonal line that runs from the commitment/3rd base foul line to the Scoring Line, the runner is out. A runner’s foot must touch the Scoring Line or the ground beyond it in order to score. The defender’s foot must be in contact with the Home plate/strike pad and catch the ball for a ruling of OUT.

Rule X. SCOREKEEPER

A. Scorekeepers will be assigned by the League Commissioner per the schedule. If a player is unable to fulfill their duty, it is the player’s responsibility to follow the League rule on finding a replacement. The manager will report missing an assignment to the League Commissioner. If the Commissioner finds no valid reason for the missed duty the player will:

- Receive a one game suspension
- Repetitive violations shall be cause for suspension from the Club

Rule XI. INJURED PLAYERS

A. If a player is injured during a game and must come out of the game due to the injury, that player is NOT an automatic out in the batting lineup.

B. A substitute player may be obtained from the stands with respect to the League’s rating/grouping criteria, if a manager chooses.

C. The Club has an emergency 911 phone in the Score Tower and First Aid kits for each dugout. An AED is provided and maintained by the Sun City Grand Homeowners Association and is located in the first base dugout.

D. The Board mandates that any suspected injury that involves the head, neck, back or chest pain requires that a manager ensure that 911 is called, regardless of the injured player’s wishes.

Rule XII. PROTESTS

A. Protest of an **interpretation of a playing rule** must be made prior to the next pitch or before all fielders have left fair territory. If, the protest is on the last play of the game, the protest must be made before all umpires have left the playing field.

B. If a decision cannot be made by the game's home plate umpire (umpire in charge) at the time the game is being played, the umpire will advise the opposing manager the game is being played under protest and the protest will be forwarded to the League's Commissioner in writing. It must state the date, time, umpire's names and how the rule in question was violated. If the Commissioner(s) cannot make a decision the protest will be forwarded to the Board who will make a decision on whether or not it is a valid protest. Protests that are upheld may result in a game forfeiture, player and/or manager suspension, probation or warnings. Protests not upheld will not result in any penalty.

Rule XIII. CONDUCT

Sportsmanship is defined as treating your fellow players, umpires and the game with respect and fairness. All members are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all Club activities. If a member violates the spirit of play and sportsmanship associated with recreational senior softball, they will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in this section.

A. Game Officials with the authority to eject players and recommend suspension for Code Violations are: The Player's Manager, Game Umpires, Chief Umpire, League Commissioner or Board Member if present.

B. Ejection or suspension from playing softball means that a Club Member cannot use any part of the Ball Park complex, including the parking lot. The suspended/ejected player must leave the area immediately. Minimum penalty: Removal from the game plus two additional game suspension and one year probation.

C. A Club Member in violation of the Code of Conduct who is on probation may have their penalty increased if another incident takes place during this probation period. Any additional Code violations within that timeframe shall result in a Club suspension and a recommendation to CAM for discipline.

D. Suspensions and Probation will be based on the recommendation by the League Commissioner and presented to the Board and/or CAM for consideration and action. Suspension and/or Probation of a Club member can be indefinite, based on the severity of the violation.

E. Suspensions and Probations can be appealed to the Board or CAM.

F. NO INDIVIDUAL SHALL:

1. With malice; shove, strike or threaten harm to any Club member or spectator.

a. Penalty: Ejection from ballpark. Incident is reported to the Board and CAM for suspension and probation.

2. Demonstrate poor sportsmanship or lack of civility by swearing, throwing any object in anger, unnecessary rough tactics, verbal attacks against any Club member or spectator or refusing to participate in customary sportsmanship activities such as post game handshakes and assisting teammates in post-game duties. All players, coaches and umpires shall

participate in the post-game handshake line.

a. Penalties that may be imposed: Warning by any Official, Ejection from the ballpark complex and possibility of suspension/probation.

3. Attempt to play in an intoxicated or impaired condition. Players who violate this will be asked to leave the field immediately and are subject to disciplinary actions outlined in this section.

a. Penalties that shall be imposed: Ejection from the ballpark complex and possibility of suspension/probation.

4. Any suspended Club member who is discovered playing on the Sun City Grand Softball Complex property will be immediately ejected from the area and reported to the Board for further action.

G. Smoking is prohibited on the playing field, grandstands, scorekeeping tower, rest rooms, picnic area, grassy area containing the practice pitcher's mound and grassy area outside the 3rd base line fence.

1. First Violation: Club member is warned.

2. Second Violation: Without cause, the Club member is asked to leave and is reported to League Commissioner for discipline.

Rule XIV. ATTIRE

A. Player's shall wear the sponsor's team shirt, current club cap, softball style gray pants or shorts for all League games. No other colored pants, sweats or shorts are to be allowed. Any exceptions require a written medical excuse each year.

B. No metal spikes may be worn anywhere within the Softball Complex.

C. Substitutes shall wear their regular team shirt when subbing, unless they are not on a team roster, in which case, they will wear a solid color t-shirt in place of a team shirt. It is recommended but not mandatory, that for team appearance and unity, that shirts be tucked in.

D. No watches, rings, (except smooth wedding bands) earrings or bracelets shall be worn. Members are allowed to wear post type earrings. Any player who chooses to wear post type earrings assumes liability for loss. Neck chains, if worn, shall be worn under the shirt at all times. Medical bracelets and necklaces may be worn at any time.

1. First Violation: Player and Manager are warned.

2. Second Violation: Without cause, player is not allowed to play and is reported to League Commissioner for discipline.

Rule XV. GROUND RULES

A. All at bats begin with a one ball, one strike count. Batters will be awarded one courtesy foul ball once they have 2 strikes.

B. The club does not use the infield fly rule.

C. A fair ball, which has been legally hit by a batter and comes to rest under an outfield vinyl panel, is "in play". If a ball comes to rest under field equipment, it is a dead ball and ruled a ground rule double.

D. A home run is any ball that is hit over the wall in fair territory or hits a foul pole above the wall. A ball that strikes the outfield wall including the top of a column in fair territory, or the block wall supporting the "Field of Dreams" sign and bounces back onto the field is a ball "in play". A ball that strikes the scoreboard or any other object on the fly, which is over the wall and in fair territory onto the field, is a home run, even if it bounces back into the field of play. When a home run is hit, the runners do not need to advance to the next base, but may proceed to their dugout

E. Each team may hit a maximum of 3 homeruns per game. Any additional homeruns will be a walk.

F. Intentional and unnecessary walks for all leagues including Saturday and summer league: Teams get one intentional walk to issue per game to any batter in an acceptable strategic situation. If there are additional or other walks issued that do not reflect a strategic situation, we have sportsmanship rules that were built to deal with individuals that refuse to comply. The umpire, coaches, commissioners and board members will be policing this policy and handling offenses on a case-by-case basis.

G. Pitchers not using the pitching screen may throw from anywhere within the six-foot box behind the pitching rubber. Pitchers using the pitching screen must pitch from the forward pitching rubber.

H. A foul tip, caught by the catcher, at any point in the pitch count is an out.

I. Our club uses the 6' minimum to 12' maximum pitch height in compliance with Senior Softball Rules.

J. The use of a roster lineup card for League games is optional.

K. If a league championship title is at stake, the Board has recommended that the Commissioners and managers assign/award co-champions for the League(s).

L. Saturday, Spring and Summer League Specific Rules (Mixed League)

1. The safety screen for the pitcher is mandatory for all mixed league games. See Rule XVI. Equipment, Part C, for rules regarding use of the safety screen.
2. Red League players playing in the mixed league may not be walked but will be pitched to until they hit a ball in play or strike out. Intentional pitching of unhittable balls to red league player will be considered unsportsmanlike and may be subject to the penalties in Rule VIII Conduct. Commissioners may, at their discretion, implement unsportsmanlike penalties for pitchers that violate this rule.

Rule XVI. EQUIPMENT

A. The 52/300 softball will be used for league play unless otherwise approved by the Board.

B. Only Club approved bats shall be used. The Club currently allows SS-USA approved Slow Pitch softball bats only. Any bat not SS-USA approved must be approved by the Bat Approval Committee before use.

C. The Club provides a Protective Screen for use by the pitcher. The screen is optional for the Red, White and Blue Leagues. The use of the screen is mandatory in the Saturday, Spring and Summer Leagues. The following rules apply when the screen is used:

1. Pitchers that opt to not use the screen MUST WEAR A MASK THAT COVERS THE TEMPLES.in addition to a chest (heart) protector. You may have the mask attached to a helmet for extra protection. Pitchers that use the screen may choose the safety equipment they wear.
2. When the screen is used it shall be centered between the permanent field markers in front of the pitching rubber nearest home plate and parallel to the pitching rubber. Pitchers using the screen shall pitch from the forward pitching rubber and pitches shall go over the screen. Pitching around the screen or from other than the forward pitching rubber will result in a warning. A second violation will result in the pitcher being ejected from the game.
 - a. The ejected pitcher may only be replaced by a player on the bench or in the field. The pitcher may not be replaced from the stands or another team.
 - b. The pitcher will be an automatic out in the batting order each time they are due to bat.
 - c. If a player is not available on the bench, the game will continue and the team will play a man down.
3. After the ball is hit, the pitcher may field any ball hit to them that does not strike the screen first however, the pitcher must stay behind the screen until the ball is hit. Batter is awarded a single if the pitcher violates this rule.
4. A batted ball that hits the screen is ruled a dead ball strike. However, the batter may not strike out by hitting the screen. If a batted ball hits the screen on the third strike it is considered a dead ball (no pitch). If the ball touches a defender before it hits the screen it is a live ball.
5. Thrown balls that hit the screen are in play and play shall continue until the umpire declares the play over.
6. If your team starts an inning using the screen it must finish the inning using the screen. That does not mean you have to use the screen every inning.
7. Pitchers that do not use the safety screen may pitch from either rubber and the space in between the rubbers.

D. The use of optional player protective equipment, such as shin guards, chest protectors, helmets, face masks, mouth guards, safety eyewear, cups, pitcher's protective screen, etc. is strongly recommended by the Club.

Rule XVII. How Changes Are Made to Club Rules:

A. Rule change proposals are to be presented to the Board. The club website has guidelines for writing a Proposal.

- B. The Board will discuss and decide on rule changes or additions. General club rule changes adopted by the Board will go into effect in the next season.
- C. Changes to League specific rules can be made effective in the current season if it will be best for the operation of that season. League specific rules will be in place at the discretion of League Commissioners and must be approved by the Board. (also see Rule 1.C).

Rule XVIII. Committee Chairpersons and Commissioners:

- A. All committee chairpersons and League Commissioners are appointed by the Board and serve at the pleasure of the Board.
- B. Committee chairpersons are responsible for selecting committee members and for the functioning of the committee.