



House League Softball Rules

Rev 3/30/2025

Philosophy: *The Northbrook Girls Softball Association is committed to providing a safe, enjoyable and instructional, yet competitive, softball experience for all of its House League players and coaches.*

With that in mind, our rules of play for House League are based on the ASA softball rules, with some special adjustments for each division of play.

1. Games, Innings and Equipment:

1.1 Game Length:

In Sprites: Games will be four innings or one hour and fifteen minutes, whichever comes first

In Ponytail: Games will be six innings or one hour and thirty minutes, whichever comes first..

In Minors and Majors: Games will be six innings or one hour and forty-five minutes, whichever comes first.

No new inning may start after the official time limit.

FOR ALL DIVISIONS: There are no time limits for the Playoff and World Series games, the run limits are still in play.

1.2 Start Times: Official start of game shall be determined by first pitch. Umpire will confirm game start time with coaches. If an inning is begun prior to the one hour and forty-five minute time limit, the game will not end until the inning is completed. The next inning begins at the time of the third out (see 1.4)

1.3 Extra Innings: If time has expired at the conclusion of six innings with the score tied, the game will be recorded as a tie. Only Playoff and World Series games will have extra innings. Position limits described in section 2 of these rules will stay in effect in the event of an extra inning game.

1.4 Inning End: In Sprites, Ponytail, and Minors: An inning will end after three outs, or four runs being scored, whichever comes first. The next inning begins immediately after either of these happening.

In Majors: An inning will end after three outs, or five runs being scored, whichever comes first. The next inning begins immediately after either of these happening.

1.5 Official Games: Time limits notwithstanding, the following constitutes an “official game” for all levels when weather prohibits further play: two and one half (2 1/2) innings shall constitute an official game, unless the home team is losing, in which case

three (3) innings constitutes an official game. If any additional innings are not completed, the score reverts to the score at the end of the last completed inning.

1.6 Resumed Games: Where a game has not been completed and not considered "official", teams may resume the game (at a later date) at the point where the game was called, keeping in mind time elapsed, runners on base, any runs scored, etc.

1.7 Cleats: No metal cleats are allowed.

1.8 Uniforms: Players should be in uniform. Players should be discouraged from wearing jewelry. Coaches will be responsible for ensuring players wear their complete uniform. Failure to wear a complete uniform will not result in ejection of a player, except all players must wear their shirt and pants. No shorts or skirt will be allowed in any game under any circumstances. Any player wearing shorts or skirt will not be allowed to play in the game until she changes into her softball pants. (Pants are required for safety during sliding).

1.9 Safety Equipment: Catchers and anyone warming up a pitcher must wear the provided catchers helmet, shin guards and chest protector. Catchers should be instructed to kneel with both knees up off the ground to prevent exposing their thighs. Batters, base runners and girls in the on deck circle must wear a batting helmet and only the batter and on deck hitter are allowed to swing bats. Pitchers must wear a facemask while pitching in games. All infielders must wear a facemask. Facemasks are optional but encouraged for outfielders.

1.10 Courtesy Runners: To encourage faster games, courtesy runners for the next inning's catcher if on base are allowed and encouraged after the second out. The courtesy runner shall be the girl making the last out.

1.11 Catcher Backups: In Sprites and Ponytail: A defensive team coach may back up the catcher. (This is to speed up the games by having someone throw pitches not caught by the catcher back to the pitcher). That person must remain silent once the player-pitcher (Ponytail only) steps on the rubber to go into her wind up and remain that way until the end of the play, except if there's a safety concern.

1.12 Bats: All bats used at games and practices must be ASA approved.

1.13 Balls:

In Sprites: 10" soft yellow ball

In Ponytail: 11" soft yellow ball

In Minors: 11" hard yellow ball.

In Majors: 12" hard yellow ball.

1.14 Lightning: The NGSA and the Northbrook Park District uses the *Thor Guard Lightning prediction* and detection system. At parks where there is a lightning detector - one long Siren will sound when lightning is detected within 5 miles of a lightning detector. If you hear this siren, see lightning, or hear thunder, seek shelter immediately. Play may resume after 30 minutes have passed without lightning. You must wait 30 minutes even if the siren sounds two short blasts indicating all clear sooner than 30 minutes. Be vigilant in monitoring and reporting weather conditions. Sirens are located at Sportsman's, Sports Center, Village Green, Wood Oaks, Meadowhill South, and the Chalet at Meadowhill Park. This rule applies to all NGSA games and practices.

1.15 Slaughter Rule: In Ponytail and Minors: If a team is losing by 5 runs after 5 innings or 9 or more runs after 4 innings, the game will be considered a slaughter and may end or continue if both teams agree to do so. But the official result and score will be reflected without any elected extra play.

In Majors: If a team is losing by 15 or more runs after 4 innings or 10 or more runs after 5 innings, the game will be considered a slaughter and may end or continue if both teams agree to do so. But the official result and score will be reflected without any elected extra play.

In Sprites: There is no slaughter rule.

In Majors Postseason Games Only: For postseason games, the final inning will have unlimited runs for both teams.

2. Player Participation:

2.1 Playing Time: The Association's House League programs are fully inclusive and fully participatory. Every team member receives playing time in each game. The policy of the house league is that players should have, and coaches should strive for, equal participation by all players.

2.2 Position Involvement: Each player must be scheduled to play at least two innings in the infield during every game.

Girls are encouraged to play all positions. However, girls playing first base should be able to adequately catch the ball and pitchers should be able to keep the game moving. (This is for safety and speeding up the game.) Pitcher and Short-Center are considered to be infield positions;

In Sprites and Ponytail: Catcher is to be considered neither an infield nor an outfield position.

In Minors and Majors: Catcher is to be considered an infield position. **In Ponytail and Minors:** *For 12 players or Less:* All girls must play the infield two (2) of the first four (4) innings. (Innings need not be consecutive).

For 13 players or more: All girls must play the infield two (2) of the first five (5) innings. (Innings need not be consecutive).

In Majors: There is no Short-Center position.

For 10 players or Less: All girls must play the infield two (2) of the first four (4) innings. (Innings need not be consecutive).

For 11 or 12 players: All girls must play the infield two (2) of the first five (5) innings. (Innings need not be consecutive).

For 13 players or more: All girls must play the infield two (2) of the first six (6) innings. (Innings need not be consecutive).

2.3 Position Limits: No player may play all 5 of the first 5 innings in the infield and/or catcher. Each player must play at least one of those innings in the outfield or be on the bench. **EXCEPTION for Sprites:** If a Sprites team is fielding 8 or fewer players, this rule no longer applies to them.

In Sprites and Ponytail: A player may not play the same position more than two innings in any game.

In Minors and Majors: A player may not play the same position more than two innings in any game **with the exception of Catcher, which cannot be played more than four innings. Also see exceptions for pitchers in Rule 4.2.**

2.4 Benching: No player may sit on the bench and be out of the defensive lineup for a second inning until all players have done so for at least one inning. Also, no player may sit on the bench and be out of the defensive lineup for two consecutive innings

In Sprites: All players play the field in every inning. No available player will be on the bench.

2.5 Batting Order: Regardless of which players are in the lineup, the batting order will be continuous and all players present will be included in the batting order. A player will bat when it is her turn to bat regardless of whether she played in the field in the previous inning, or is scheduled to play in the field in the next inning.

In Minors and Majors: Batting out of order is an appeal play that may be made by the defensive team only. If batting out of order is discovered:

1. While the incorrect batter is still at bat:

The correct batter must take the batter's position and assume the balls and strikes count. Any runners that advanced while the incorrect batter was at bat shall be legal.

2. After the incorrect batter has completed her turn at bat and before the next pitch to the following batter or before the pitcher and all infielders have vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory:

The player who should have batted is out. Any advance of runners and any runs scored shall be nullified. All outs made stand. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat, with the exception of, if the incorrect batter is called out as a result of their time at bat, and is scheduled to be the proper batter, skip that player and the next person in the line-up will be the batter.

3. After a pitch has been thrown to the next batter following the incorrect batter or after the pitcher and all infielders have vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory:

The turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal. All runs scored, runners advanced and outs made are legal. The next batter shall be the player whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No out is called for failure to bat. Players who have been skipped in the batting order have lost their turn at bat until their spot in the batting order is reached again in the regular order.

2.6 Depleted Rosters:

In Sprites: A team may play with 5 or more players. If a team can only field 4 players or fewer at the start of the game, it will be recorded as a forfeit regardless if the game is played. When a team is playing with 9 or fewer players, the opposing team is encouraged to lend outfielder(s) for each inning.

In Ponytail and Minors: A team may play with 7 or more players. If a team can only field 6 players or fewer at the start of the game, it will be recorded as a forfeit regardless if the game is played. When a team is playing with 9 or fewer players, the opposing team is encouraged to lend outfielder(s) for each inning. Borrowed players for use in any Playoff or World Series game, if needed, will be determined by the league commissioner.

In Majors: If a team does not have 9 or more players available to play the game it may borrow a player from its sister team (call-up team). The sister team will be designated by the Association. It is recommended that you call the coach of your sister team to ask his/her recommendation. The intent of this rule is to facilitate the playing and completion of games. The same borrowed player may not be called up for more than 2 games per season regardless of what team called them up unless approved by the league commissioner. Call ups may only pitch with preapproval from the league commissioner. A Majors team may play with 6 or more players. If a Majors team can only field 5 or fewer, at the start of the game, it will be recorded as a forfeit regardless if it is played or not. Call-up players for use in a Playoff or World Series game, if needed, will be determined by the league commissioner.

Advance Notice: If a team notifies NGSA 7 days or more in advance of a game that they will not be able to field the minimum required number of players, then NGSA and the Head Coaches of the two teams shall make a good faith attempt to reschedule the game at a date, time, and place agreeable to all parties. If an agreeable rescheduling cannot be worked out prior to the originally scheduled game day, then the game will be recorded as a forfeit. If a team notifies NGSA less than 7 days prior to a scheduled game or does not provide notice, the game will be recorded as a forfeit.

Forfeit Recording: Forfeits will be recorded as a 9-0 score, with forfeiting team losing.

3. Defensive Alignment

3.1 Defensive Positions: **In Sprites and Ponytail :** There will be ten defensive positions, as follows: First Base, Second Base, Third Base, Shortstop, Short Center, Left Field, Right Field, Center Field, Pitcher and Catcher, however, teams may elect to field 4 outfielders, although, you cannot borrow a player from another team as the 4th outfielder. **In Sprites**, if a team has 11 players present, they must all play, so a 4th outfielder will be used. Also in Sprites the pitcher is a fielder only (coach pitches). Finally, the catcher in Sprites plays by the backstop and must wear a batting helmet (no other catching equipment provided).

In Minors: There will be ten defensive positions, as follows: First Base, Second Base, Third Base, Shortstop, Short Center, Left Field, Right Field, Center Field, Pitcher and Catcher.

In Majors: There will be nine defensive positions, as follows: First Base, Second Base, Third Base, Shortstop, Left Field, Right Field, Center Field, Pitcher and Catcher.

3.2 Infield Positioning: Infielders may not be positioned more than three feet in front of the baseline. An infielder may play behind the baseline, but no further than 10 feet. This must be brought to the umpire's attention before the next pitch is thrown to correct the defensive positioning.

In Minors and Majors: If the batter shows the intention to bunt, the infielders may charge more than 3 feet in front of the baseline.

3.3 Baseline Positioning: Defensive players may not stand on the base or in the baseline unless attempting to force a runner out, tag a runner, or field a ball in play.

3.4 Outfield Positioning: Outfielders must be positioned beyond the skinned area of the infield (if the field has a skinned infield). If there is no skinned infield, or if the field is completely skinned, the outfielder must be positioned at least twenty-five feet beyond the infield.

In Sprites: Outfielders may play on the dirt, but be at least 10 feet behind the infielders.

3.5 Pitching Distance:

In Sprites: Coaches must pitch within the circle, which is around a 30' mound distance.

In Ponytail: Teams/coaches have the ability to move the mound up to 32', but pitchers have the option to continue to pitch from 35'.

In Minors: The pitching distance shall be thirty-five (35) feet as prescribed in ASA rules (Rule 2, Section 1).

In Majors: The pitching distance shall be forty feet (40) feet as prescribed in ASA rules (Rule 2, Section 1).

3.6 Base Lengths: The base lengths will be sixty (60) feet as prescribed in ASA rules (Rule 2, Section 1)

In Sprites: Base lengths are forty five (45) feet.

3.7 Substitutions: Once defensive players have been positioned for an inning, they may not be substituted or repositioned except in the case of emergency or injury. The pitcher may be substituted, but if possible should assume the position of the person that is replacing her.

4. Pitching

Sprites Note: Only section 4.4 applies to Sprites, as there is no player pitching in Sprites.

4.1 Pitching Technique: The pitching technique shall be underhand fast-pitch. Windmill delivery is strongly encouraged. Pitchers may take a step back off the pitching rubber in their wind-up with their non-pivot foot.

4.2 Inning Limitations: A player may pitch a maximum of two innings in a game (except in Majors as noted below). Because of the required substitutions and participation, the two innings need not be consecutive, and a player may go to the bench between the innings she pitches. One (1) pitch in an inning will constitute 1 full inning.

In Majors: Pitchers may pitch a maximum of three innings in a game as long as they are not a current travel player in any program. If they do currently play travel in any program (NGSA or otherwise), they must obey the two inning limit.

4.3 Proper Delivery: There will be no penalty for improper placement of the feet by the pitcher. The umpire will make one attempt to correct the infraction by instructing the pitcher (and her coach) in the proper technique. Pitchers may start with one or two feet on the pitching rubber and may take one step (not two) towards the batter before releasing the ball. A step back as part of the delivery is allowed. If the pitcher cannot execute the proper technique after the umpires initial attempt to correct her, she will not be allowed to continue pitching.

4.4 Balls and Strikes:

In Sprites: Balls and strikes will be called by the offensive team's coach from behind home plate. If three strikes are thrown by the offensive team's coach to a single batter, the batter will hit off a tee until that batter is able to hit the ball into play. (During this time, the player-pitcher shall either have both feet in the circle or have one foot in or on the circle to the right or left of the coach-pitcher.) THERE WILL BE NO BASES ON BALLS OR STRIKEOUTS. When the adult throws pitches, the objective will be to allow the batter to hit the ball.

In Ponytail: Balls and strikes will be called by the umpire from behind home plate. If Three balls are thrown by the pitcher to a single batter, the opposing coach or designated adult will throw pitches until that batter is able to hit the ball into play, or strike out. (During this time, the player-pitcher shall either have both feet in the circle or have one foot in or on the circle to the right or left of the coach-pitcher.) THERE WILL BE NO BASES ON BALLS. When the adult throws pitches, the objective will be to allow the batter to hit the ball. However, a player can be called out on strikes or strike out by swinging and missing on a pitch thrown by an adult.

Coach—when pitching to his/her own player, should pitch from inside the pitching circle. If the coach pitching is unable to get out of the way and is hit by a batted ball, the ball will be live. The coach should not play the ball. If, in the umpire's discretion, the coach intentionally interferes with a live ball or fielder, the batter will be called out and base runners returned to their original bases.

In Minors: Balls and strikes will be called by the umpire from behind home plate. **Five** balls will constitute a walk, the batter is awarded 1st base.

In Majors: Balls and strikes will be called by the umpire from behind home plate. Four balls will constitute a walk, the batter is awarded 1st base.

4.5 Hit Batsmen: If a pitcher hits a batter with a pitch, the batter will be awarded 1st base. If, in the umpire's opinion, the batter has not made an attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch, the pitch will be ruled a ball and it will not be counted against the pitcher as a pitch that has hit a batter and the batter will not be awarded first base. If a pitch hits the ground before hitting a batter, the pitch is considered a dead ball pitch, will be called a ball and will not be counted against the pitcher as a pitch that hit a batter. If a batter swings at a ball that hits her, or gets hit by a pitch in the strike zone, it will be counted as a strike. A pitcher who hits two batters with pitches in one inning may not pitch further in that inning, **except in Majors** where the removal is three batters in one inning.

4.6 Pitcher Warm-Ups: When a pitching change occurs, whether during or between innings, a pitcher shall be allowed a maximum of 5 warm-up pitches. After the pitcher has completed that number of pitches, as long as the defensive team and batter are ready, play shall begin or resume. If there is a delay in the defensive team or batter being ready, the umpire may allow the pitcher to continue throwing warm-up pitches at the umpire's discretion.

5. Batting and Base Running

5.1 Bunting: In Sprites and Ponytail: There will be no bunting or intentional half-swinging allowed.

A batter violating this rule will be called out.

In Minors and Majors: Bunting or intentional half-swinging *is* allowed. Fake bunting, followed by a swing is extremely dangerous to the fielders and is not allowed. A batter who shows intention to bunt on a pitch, but then takes a swing at that pitch, shall be called out by the umpire regardless of whether or not she made contact with the ball.

5.1.1 Chopped Ball: A player may, however, chop the ball into the ground with a full swing.

5.2 Thrown Bat: A batter who throws a bat will be given a warning. If necessary, the umpire will instruct the player or her coach on the proper technique. A player who throws a bat for the second time in a game after receiving a warning will be called out.

5.3 Dead Ball Arc: Any batted ball in fair territory is a live ball. There is no dead ball arc in front of home plate.

5.4 Infield Fly Rule: The infield fly rule does not apply.

5.5 Tagging Up: Runners may advance to any base, including home plate, by tagging up after a fly ball is caught, regardless of whether the catch is made in fair or foul territory. The advance is at the runner's risk.

5.6 Foul Flies and Foul Tips: A batter who hits a foul fly which is caught by any fielder is out. A batter who hits a foul tip which is caught by the catcher is out if there were two strikes on her when the foul tip was hit. A caught foul tip with fewer than two strikes on the batter is considered to be a strike.

5.6.1 Foul Tip: A "foul tip" is a foul ball which does not exceed the height of the batter.

5.6.2 Foul Fly: A "foul fly" is a fly ball higher than the batter's height, in foul territory.

5.7 Strikes: A batter shall be out by strikeout if three strikes are called on her. Strikes may be by swinging and missing, swinging and hitting a foul ball, or a pitch not swung at but in the strike zone and called by the umpire. A foul ball hit when two strikes are on the batter is not a third strike. A ball not swung at that hits home plate shall not be called a strike.

In Sprites: There are no strikeouts. See rule 4.4.

5.7.1 Dropped Third Strike: A runner may not advance to first base on a dropped third strike.

5.8 Hit By Pitch: A batter shall be awarded first base if she is hit by a pitch unless the pitch has hit the ground before hitting the batter or, if in the umpire's opinion, the batter has not made an attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch. In both of those cases the batter will not be awarded first base and the pitch will be ruled a ball. The batter may elect to swing at a ball and, if she does, or if she is hit by a pitch in the strike zone, the call shall be a strike.

In Sprites: If a coach pitch hits a batter, this is just a dead ball.

5.9 The Strike Zone: The strike zone is the space over any part of home plate, when a batter assumes a natural batting stance adjacent to home plate. Pitches that hit the plate shall be called a ball.

In Sprites and Ponytail: The strike zone shall extend from the batter's chin to the mid calf, and one inch inside and outside the plate when the batter is in a normal batting stance.

In Minors: The strike zone shall extend from the batter's armpits to the mid-calf, and one inch inside and outside the plate when the batter is in a normal batting stance.

In Majors: The strike zone shall extend from the batter's armpits to the knee, and one inch inside and outside the plate when the batter is in a normal batting stance. (The intent of these strike zone rules, in all house leagues, are to encourage batters to swing and hit the ball and to promote the pitcher throwing strikes.)

5.10 Sliding: Sliding is at the discretion of the base runner. However, base runners should be encouraged to slide into bases on close plays to avoid collision, base runner interference and possible injury.

5.11 Lead Offs: **In Sprites and Ponytail:** There are no lead offs and a runner may not leave the base until the pitched ball passes home plate. If the runner leaves a base early, the umpire shall immediately stop play, the ball is dead (regardless of

whether it is hit into play) and the runner shall receive a warning. After one warning per game, per team, runners who leave base early will be called out in Ponytail.

In Minors and Majors: The runner may take a lead off and leave the base upon the pitcher releasing the pitch and not before. If the runner leaves a base early, the umpire shall immediately stop play, the ball is dead (regardless of whether it is hit into play) and the runner shall receive a warning. After one warning per game, per team, runners who leave base early will be called out.

5.12 Stealing: In Sprites, Ponytail, and Minors: There is no stealing and runners may not advance on a passed ball.

In Majors: the runners may steal on any pitch count. Runners may steal 2nd & 3rd only. When stealing 2nd or 3rd, the runner may not advance further on an overthrow. To be clear, runners may only steal a maximum of one base per pitch, even if the catcher makes an overthrow in an attempt to throw them out. At no time may a runner steal home. A batter advancing to first on a walk may not steal 2nd until the next pitch. Ball four is not a dead ball, however, and therefore base runners may steal on ball 4 at their own risk. For example, a base runner on second base could steal third on ball 4, but the batter must stop at first. Finally, if a team is up by seven or more runs, they must stop stealing unless or until the lead goes below seven runs.

5.13 Overthrow, "In Bounds": If an overthrow does not go out of bounds but stays in fair or foul territory, the runner can advance one base at her own risk.

In Sprites: There is no advancing on any overthrow.

In Ponytail: A runner cannot score as a result of a second overthrow. There is a wall at third on a second overthrow.

In Majors: A runner cannot score from third base on an overthrow that occurs AT third base. They CAN score on overthrows that occur at other bases, within the regular rules.

5.14 Overthrow, "Out of Bounds": - If an overthrow leaves the field of play into out of bounds territory (generally past the outer screen, into the dugout area, or in an area determined by an umpire that impedes a fielders attempt to make a play on the ball), then the runner is awarded one base and it becomes a dead ball.

(Again, the only exception to this rule would be an overthrow at 1st base in Ponytail, see rule 5.15, and the wall at third on a second overthrow, also in Ponytail, see rule 5.13).

In Sprites: There is no advancing on any overthrow.

5.15 Overthrows at First Base: In Ponytail only: When a batter hits a ball in the field, and a play is made against that batter at first, and that play results in an overthrow, neither the batter nor any runners may advance further on that overthrow. To be clear, there is no advancing on overthrows at 1st base in Ponytail.

In Sprites: There is no advancing on any overthrow.

5.16 Sendback Rule: A base runner that advances past the maximum number of bases allowed on an overthrow will be allowed to return to the last base freely and it will be considered a dead ball. However, a base runner that overruns or over slides a base may be tagged out.

5.17 Running Through 1st Base: A runner running through 1st base may not be tagged out unless she shows intent to advance towards second base. Simply turning left instead of right does not show intent to advance.

5.18 Dead Ball: A play is considered dead when the pitcher has possession of the ball within a 10 foot arc of the pitching rubber or on an overthrow back to the pitcher when the pitcher is within a 10 foot arc of the pitching rubber and when otherwise described in the rules. Base runners may not advance further at this point unless they are more than

halfway to the next base. If they are less than halfway, they must go back to the previous base.

In Sprites: On batted balls in play, if a ball is hit outside the infield as designated by the base lines, runners may continue to advance until the ball has arrived back in the infield (regardless of if the throw has been caught). If they are less than halfway, they must go back to the previous base.

5.19 Pick Off Attempts: A base runner may elect to advance on a pick off attempt at their own risk.

5.20 Fielders Interference: Fielders may not block the path of the base runner or the base a runner is trying to reach without the ball. The base runner will automatically be awarded the appropriate base when a fielder blocks the path of a runner or be called safe at a base that was obstructed when a fielder does not have control of the ball. However, interference will not be called on the fielder when making a play on the ball or runner.

5.21 Runners Interference: Base runners may not intentionally collide or intentionally attempt to dislodge the ball from the fielder. A base runner intentionally doing either of these will be called out and ejected from the game. A runner has the right to slide into a base in an attempt to avoid a tag and, if in doing so, the ball becomes dislodged, said runner is not in violation of this rule.

5.22 Baserunner Touching Ball: If a batted ball hits the batter or a base runner in fair territory before it is touched by a defensive player or before it passes an infielder, that batter or base runner will be called out and the play resulting in a dead ball. The pitcher is not considered an infielder in this case and the ball may pass the pitcher with the batter or base runner still being called out. Once the ball is touched by a defensive player or passes an infielder (excluding the pitcher), the batter or base runner will not be called out if they come in contact with the ball and it will remain a live ball.

5.23 Backstop: A batted ball that hits the backstop screen will become a dead ball. If it is caught by a fielder before it hits the ground it is considered a foul strike and the batter will not be called out.

5.24 On Deck Placement: On deck hitters must not be placed in front of the entrance to any dugout, must wear a batting helmet and must stay in the on deck area until it is her turn to bat and the current play is over. Interference will be called on the on deck hitter if she impedes with a live ball or a fielder attempting to make a play.

In Sprites and Ponytail: The on deck hitter must remain in the on deck area in front of their own teams dugout.

In Minors and Majors: The on deck hitter may either remain in the on deck area in front of their own teams dugout, or may elect to be in the on deck area in front of the opposing teams dugout if the current hitter has their back to them. If the on deck hitter elects to place herself in front of the opposing players dugout, she must cross in back of home plate before the pitcher goes into her wind up.

6. General

6.1 Behavior and Conduct: Coaches are responsible for the behavior of all players, assistant coaches and parents/family/spectators of their players. The Association's Code of Conduct shall be in effect at all times, and the umpires shall have sole authority thereunder, **except in Sprites** where the head coaches (as there is no umpire) of both teams shall enforce the code in cooperation.

6.2 Coaches Placement: Except for base coaching, coaches are to remain in the dugout area except:

6.2.1 For conferences with their own players during time outs

6.2.2 To set defensive players in position prior to the beginning of an inning.

6.2.3 In the event of an injury to any player.

6.2.4 In the event the umpire requests the coach's presence on the field.

6.2.5 In Ponytail: When a coach has come in to pitch after 3 balls, as described in rule 4.4, or when a coach is backing up the catcher as described in rule 1.11.

6.2.6 In Sprites: A coach (offensive team) pitching as described in Rule 4.4, plus up to two coaches (defensive team) positioned behind the infielders for player positioning and guidance. Also one coach (offensive team) to back up the catcher and get the ball back to the coach-pitcher to speed things along. NOTE: That coach is responsible for A) loudly calling foul or dead balls by the hitter and B) quickly removing the tee from home plate immediately after a ball is hit off the tee.

6.3 Fields: All softball fields are designated as no smoking areas prior to and during games. Alcoholic beverages are also prohibited from all softball fields.

6.4 Game Scores and Summaries: Each team will keep score of the game on the score sheet provided. Items of note include, but are not limited to, outstanding hits, plays in the field or pitching. The purpose of this report is to assist the Association with its public relations effort. The NGSA will communicate the submission method to coaches.

6.5 Umpire Evaluations: Each coach is required to fill out an umpire evaluation at the conclusion of each game, for games where an umpire has worked the game. The NGSA will communicate the submission method to coaches.

6.6 Rescheduled Games: In the event a game is rained out or cancelled due to inclement weather or other circumstances, the game will be made up, on the next available date and field, as long as a date, time, and field can be arranged.

6.7 Blood: A player, coach or umpire who is bleeding or who has fresh blood on their uniform or clothing shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment can be administered. The interpretation of this rule is at the umpire's discretion.

6.8 Protests: No protests will be considered by the Association. Umpires have sole authority to supervise the game. **Coaches are reminded that the House League is a league to foster enjoyment, instruction, inclusion and participation, and that winning games is only a secondary goal.**

6.9 Suspended Play: The Umpire may suspend play for up to 30 minutes or terminate play when, in the umpire's sole opinion, atmospheric conditions, temperature, or the amount of light is not appropriate for playing the game. The umpire must inform the coaches of his/her decision.

6.10 Players on the Field: Besides playing a defensive position, batting, base running or base coaching, players are to remain in the dugout. Only one player is allowed to be on deck.

6.11 Readyng Players: All teams should have defensive field assignments and be ready to take the field immediately following the 3rd out.

6.12 Negativity: All derogatory cheers with negative comments towards the other team or those done loudly to interfere with the concentration of the opponent are not allowed.

6.13 Authorized Personnel: Other than the NGSA board approved coaches, no parent, sibling, or any family member or spectator shall be allowed in the dugout, on the field of play, or interact with an umpire during a game. Only approved coaches, players and umpires are allowed in the dugout or on the field during a game. If a team is short-handed with coaches, a parent will be allowed to help in the dugout, back up the catcher in Ponytail, or coach a base but must be approved by an NGSA board member.

6.14 Lineup Exchange: Each coach shall present the opposing coach with a written batting order and defensive fielding chart prior to the start of each game. Any changes made to these during a game must be brought to the attention of the opposing coach.

6.15 Coaches Interference: If a coach for the hitting team intentionally interferes with a live ball, batter/base runner or fielder, the batter or base runner shall be called out. If a coach for the defensive team interferes with a live ball, fielder, or batter/base runner, the batter or base runner shall be called safe.

6.16 Rule Clarification: If clarification of a rule is needed, head coaches or their designee should meet with the umpires and discuss it in a calm and professional manner. Judgment calls cannot be debated or argued. If a coach wishes to discuss a decision on a judgment call, they must wait until after the 3rd out of the inning and do so in a calm and professional manner. The umpire's decision is FINAL.

In Sprites: In the instance of a rules question, the teams' head coaches will work cooperatively to come to a decision (no umpires in Sprites).

6.17 Postseason Seeding: For the purpose of final standings and seedings for postseason play, the order within each division shall be determined by Winning Percentage, calculated as: $(\text{wins} + (0.5 \times \text{ties})) / \text{games}$. If multiple teams are tied by winning percentage, the tie-breaker rules proceed by the following in order until a difference is found: Head-To-Head record between the tied teams, Total Run Differential (highest positive), Total Runs Against (lowest), Total Runs Scored (highest), and finally a coin toss conducted by the NGSA House Director or their designate. **In Sprites** there is no postseason.

LIGHTNING WARNING SYSTEMS

The Northbrook Park District has recently upgraded the lightning warning systems within the District. There are two main units. One (Strike Guard) is located at Sportsman's Country Club with ancillary units at West Park and Wood Oaks Green. Another unit (ThorGuard) is located at Techny Prairie Park and Fields with ancillary units at the Chalet in Meadowhill Park and Village Green.

ThorGuard

- Techny Prairie Park and Fields: strobe light located on top of the building next to the lake
- Village Green: strobe light located on top of the Village Green Center
- Meadowhill Park: strobe light located on top of the Chalet next to the Velodrome

ThorGuard, a lightning **prediction** system will sound when there is an immediate threat of lightning. ThorGuard functions by evaluating the dynamics of the electrical energy within the atmosphere. This type of prediction system can generate false alarms so it is very important to be vigilant in monitoring weather conditions when participating in outdoor activities. One long (15-second) siren will sound and a strobe will flash on the unit when there is an immediate threat of lightning. Seek shelter immediately.

The siren will sound three 5-second blasts and the strobe will go off after the ThorGuard system determines conditions are safe. Play may resume only after the all clear siren.

Strike Guard

- Sportsman's Country Club: strobe light located on the clubhouse, on the pump house near 17th hole, #5 green/#11 tee on the 18-hole course, the #4 tee on the east-9 course
- West Park: strobe light located on the Sports Center roof (NE corner)
- Wood Oaks: strobe light located on the tennis building in the middle of the park

Strike Guard, a lightning **detection** system will sound when actual lightning strikes have been detected within a 5-mile radius of Sportsman's Country Club. Strike Guard monitors cloud and cloud-to-ground lightning within a user-set radius and the technology prevents false alarms. It is imperative that warnings are adhered to immediately since the system has actually detected lightning in the area. The alert will be the same as the ThorGuard system. One long (15-second) siren will sound and a strobe will flash on the unit when lightning has been detected. Seek shelter immediately.

The siren will sound three 5-second blasts and the strobe will go off after the Strike Guard system determines conditions are safe. Play may resume only after the all clear siren.

Be vigilant in monitoring threatening weather and always err on the side of caution. Seek shelter immediately if:

- You hear one long siren.
- You hear thunder (regardless of siren).
- You see lightning (regardless of siren).

Avoid open areas, water, tall trees, metal fences, overhead wires, power lines, elevated ground, golf carts, mowers, cellular phones and radios.

30/30 Lightning Safety Rule

Go indoors if, after seeing lightning, you cannot count to 30 before hearing thunder. Stay indoors for 30 minutes after hearing the last clap of thunder.

The Northbrook Park District strives to provide a safe environment for participation in all activities.