

NYSA Softball By-Laws

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1.0 ALLIANCE: GULF COAST GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION AND THE GULF COAST SPORTS

Gulf Coast Girls Softball Association

The Gulf Coast Girls Softball Association and the NYSA Softball program strives to provide a positive, competitive, youth softball experience for each player, parent and coach. We are dedicated to the advancement and long-term player development of physical, emotional, and social skills. While winning is what each player, parent and coach strive for in recreational softball, winning will not be placed above good sportsmanship (respecting rules, opponents, officials, teammates, parents, and one's self) or what is best for the team. We have committed ourselves to the advancement of fast pitch softball in the Gulf Coast area (Escambia, Okaloosa and Santa Rosa counties). As well as continued player development by building character and to use softball as a tool to teach young athletes in a way that improves their self-confidence and self-esteem, while making them better, more productive community citizens.

Gulf Coast Girls Softball Association will be used to schedule all games between parks. Two meetings will be held yearly to review by-laws and create schedules for all Rec teams. The Commishiomner will attend meetings and relay all by-law proposed changes to the softball committee for review.

Gulf Coast Sports

All tournaments for rec and slect players will be played in the Gulf Coast Sports organization. All Rec teams will be sanctioned to the Gulf Coast Sports once a draft is complete. Commishioner will be responsible for sanctioning all teams.

2.0 RULES

This league uses official playing rules of the Gulf Coast Girls Softball Association (GCGSA) and USSSA, except for rules excerpted at local league option in these Rules and Regulations. All tournaments outside of the Association will play under USFA. (GCS))

- I. 8U, 10U & 12U umpires will call pitches from either behind the plate or from the field located outside of the pitchers circle, behind the pitcher, 14U and up MUST have umpires call pitches from behind the plate only. Umpire can be withing 15 feet of home plate at the 6U level and is not required to stand directly behind the plate.*
- II. 6U and 8U only – When a batter hits the ball, the pitching coach will make every attempt to remove themselves from the field of play. They must exit into foul terriorty without interfering with the play. Interference may be called if a coach's positon hinders the outcome of the play. If the pitching coach makes contact with the ball, the fielding team may choose between letting the play stand or a dead ball. Upon dead ball, pitch count will resume at count prior to previous play.*
- III. 6u will allow (2) coach pitch ball and (3) tee swings. Coaches will be allowed anywhere on the field and it is highly suggested that both visitor and home coaches stay on the field to speed up play.*
- IV. 8U will allow coaches 10 feet from each foul line in left and right field when team is on defense.*

3.0 COACHES

- I. *Managers and coaches are approved by the Softball Committee / Board of Directors and serve at the preference of the Board. The ultimate responsibility of the Board is to sustain the Association; it chooses managers and coaches who it believes serve the best interests of the Association on the playing field and who pass a mandatory background check. Head coaches will ensure all team moms/dads, assistant coaches, and any other person over the age of 18 submit a background check if they enter the field of play. The Commissioner will verify all backgrounds before season start. The board does have the right to deny any person(s) a coaching and/or a manager's position. Anyone who Manages teams outside the park are disqualified.*
- II. *All persons interested in a managerial position must submit a written letter to the league Commissioner, or a member of the Board of Directors. The league Commissioner will place all requests before the Softball Committee / Board of Directors for a vote of acceptance. All letters requesting a managerial position shall be submitted by Draft Day.*
- III. *If, during the course of a season, a manager, coach, or player is thrown out of a game, they will be suspended for the following game. If a second or subsequent time during the same season he/she shall be automatically suspended from managing, coaching, or playing any further that year unless reinstated by the Board of Directors.*
- IV. *At the point that managers and coaches fail to perform their duties in a manner consistent with the Mission, Goals, and Values of the Association, the Board may convene to undertake sanctions against them. Any manager or coach who has been sanctioned by the Board who refuses to abide by the decision of the Board is subject to immediate and permanent suspension from all managing and coaching duties involving NYSA ball teams.*
- V. *While the Board recognizes that managers and coaches will make mistakes in their handling of situations and emotions of the game will evoke strong reactions to on-the-field conditions, the Board will not tolerate unsportsmanlike behavior. Managers can expect that the use of language which will in any manner refer or reflect upon opposing players, managers, coaches, umpires, or spectators or incite fights or other physical confrontations will be grounds for Board action.*
- VI. *All interested coaches will be required to submit a written bio to softball@nysasports.com. They will also be required to attend a mandatory coaches meeting held prior to the start of each season.*

4.0 ELIGIBILITY

League age is defined as the softball player's age on August 1 of each year for the upcoming fall and spring season in accordance with USSSA. Eligible players are permitted to play up 1 age year but the decision must be made prior to the last day of registration and with Commissioner's approval. In an effort to include all eligible players we offer a scholarship on a case by case basis, only the commissioner and Board of Directors can approve them due to budgets. The scholarships shall be repaid with 8 hours of

volunteer time to the softball program. A "Season" for NYSA shall be defined as both the fall and spring season, with the fall season being the beginning of the new season.

5.0 TEAM TRYOUTS SELECTION AND DRAFTS

All managers have equal opportunity in the selection of players. While some teams might not choose as many Freeze Players as is allowed here, the emphasis is placed on the uniform **opportunity** to select them. To further promote this emphasis, post-registration player selection places players first on teams that have the most vacancies.

- I. The fall season allows coaches the opportunity to have unlimited freezes in accordance with Gulf Coast Girls Softball Association. The spring season has a maximum of (6) freezes defined below.
- II. The manager must submit signed Freeze Player forms and a complete roster of Freeze Players to the league Commissioner or his duly authorized representative no later than 6:00 PM the Friday before "Tryouts". Failure of a Manager to present the freeze form will result in the player being placed in the regular draft. Once a player commits on a signed Freeze Player form for a given season, they are considered placed on that team by the Commissioner, unless they are released by mutual consent of the parent and the manager. Once a manager has obtained a signed Freeze Player form from a parent, all parties are expected to act in good faith in keeping that player on the team's roster.
- III. There shall not be other manager, coach or sponsor privileges or freezes. There are, however, sibling freeze in that a sibling will be placed on the same team as a rostered sibling. Each sibling will count as a freeze on that given team. (Example- triplets count as 3 freezes) Parents may request that siblings not be placed on the same team. There will be transportation freezes as well.
- IV. Tryouts will be held for all non-frozen players at a designated time and place. These tryouts will be supervised by the league Commissioner. Tryouts are not a qualification process; but rather they are a playing skills demonstration intended to assist in the player selection process.
- V. The team with the fewest players shall select first until he or she has the equal amount of the next lowest coach, once the rosters are balanced teams will draw numbers to determine the sequence to select the remaining players.
- VI. When there are no more players to balance teams, the Commissioner will note the drawing sequence for the purpose of placing players who register subsequent to player selection. New players will be placed on these teams unless shortages on other teams prove more critical in the judgment of the Commissioner and the Director of Player Selection.
- VII. Immediately after draft selection, managers will have an opportunity to trade draft picks with the approval of the Commissioner, and the affected team managers present. At the end of the draft meeting, team rosters are final.

Note: Participant who is a member of a high school softball team may NOT participate in NYSA Girls Softball.

6.0 OBLIGATIONS

The park purchases practice and league game balls for each team and issues them to team managers through league Commissioners. Catchers gear is available if necessary. The Commissioner may issue the equipment and managers will be required to return equipment immediately following the conclusion of the season. All park-issued equipment must be returned to the league Commissioner prior to All Star selection. The home team for each game is responsible for providing two game balls for the game (which the team retains after the game). The park will only pay for equipment purchased or approved for purchase by the Commisions and Board of Directors

It will be the responsibility of the home team to have the playing field ready for play. It is the responsibility of the visiting team to insure that all equipment is put away if their game is the last game of the evening; to include dragging and raking the field. If the visiting team is not Navarre the home team is responsible for all.

*It shall be the responsibility of both teams and parents to pick up the trash and garbage around the field at the end of the game. Teams with the final game of the evening have ultimate responsibility for the condition of their side of the playing field to include trash and garbage around the field, in the dugouts, and the bleachers. Along with putting gators away and ensuring sheds are locked. **Teams failing to do this will automatically forfeit their next winning game. This will be enforced by the leaugue Commisioner.***

It will be the responsibility of the home team to have an official scorer preferably over the age of 18. The scorer shall maintain the scorebook and keep score at the designated area of their league. The official scorer is an official of the park and a direct representative of the Commisioner. As such, the scorer shall remain neutral in spite of his team affiliation. The scorer's responsibilities include:

(a) If the teams change sides before three outs, the scorer shall immediately inform the umpire of the mistake.

(b) If the game is protested or play suspended, the scorer shall make note of the exact situation at the time of the protest or suspension, including the score, the number of outs, the position of any runners, and the ball and strike count on the batter.

*(c) The Official scorer **shall not** call the attention of the umpire or of any member of either team to the fact that a player is batting out of turn. (Form of electronic devices included)*

(e) The scorer shall record and keep the official start time of the game and notify when the time limit has been met. The scorer shall also ensure both managers sign the scorebook once the game is completed.

7.0 PROTEST

All protests for regular league play will follow official rules for the affiliated baseball or softball league, except that the written protest will be submitted to the league Commissioner or President with a protest fee of \$100.00. In order for the written protest to be filed in a timely manner, it must be filed within 48 hours and accompanied by the \$100.00. Said protest fee will be refunded if the protest is found in favor of the protesting team. After the umpires have left the confines of the playing field a protest cannot be made, the game is considered over. You cannot protest any judgment calls (ball, strikes, safe, outs, fair or foul calls etc....)

The protest committee will consist of the League Commissioner (unless there is a conflict) and two managers from the league to be chosen by the League Commissioner. The Commissioner may choose a manager from another league if the manager's experience is sufficient to properly assess the protest. A protest that the protest committee has acted upon, an illegal protest, or the team manager or the acting team manager shall make an appeal of the protest committee's decision, in writing to the League Commissioner & Board of Directors, within 48 hours of notice of the protest committee's decision. The decision of the Board of Directors is final, unless the decision is appealable to the affiliating organization.

8.0 RESCHEDULED GAMES

The league Commissioner will schedule all rescheduled games. Games called before they become regulation must be resumed from the point of termination when the game is rescheduled by league officials, with as nearly the same line-up as possible.

In the event of a rain delay during the first game, that game will be completed, if possible and, if necessary, the second game will be rescheduled. After commencement of games, the umpires will make the decision. Appropriate time must be allowed from the time the game is stopped before the umpires terminate the game.

All Navarre vs Navarre games require rescheduling to insure proper standing exist at the end of season.

9.0 SAFETY

Organizational rules do not require the wearing of face mask. However, for safety of play at NYSA all players MUST wear a helmet with a face shield while batting; all infield & outfield positions MUST wear a fielder's mask. 10U and up does not require the use of mask in the outfield, however they are highly recommended.

No Jewlery on any player during any game, the umpire can give one warning after that the player is ejected from play, if the team falls below the number of players (8) the team of the ejected player will take an out on the 9th batter.

No Steel cleats are allowed. Turf shoes are allowed in place of cleats.

10.0 FIELD of PLAY

All NYSA recreational teams will be required to dress alike (in uniform) and bat their entire roster during league play. The purpose of the Participation Rule is to ensure players have an opportunity to play in their teams' games. It is understood that circumstances might arise in which a team might not satisfy the parameters of the Participation Rule although every reasonable and practical effort has been made to satisfy the rule. It is also understood that a team losing a game under the mercy rule might not anticipate a shortened game and therefore not complete all substitutions. A team that wins a game under the mercy rule should make all substitutions in recognition of the scoring margin and in anticipation of the invocation of the mercy rule. If the player is late to the game and it has already started the coach reserves the right to determine if the player participates in the game (depending on approval from the other team and if the batting order has completed one full rotation). Failure to adhere to this rule will result in forfeiture of the game. Discipline cannot be used as a reason for non-participation.

The 6-9 run rule is always in effect through the completion of the fifth inning. This is in effect to limit or reduce the risk of serious injury to the defensive/offensive player while attempting to take extra bases after the sixth run has crossed the plate which allow the maximum number of runs that can be scored (9) in an inning through the fifth inning. After the fifth inning it is unlimited runs. If the 6th run is a walk the once the runner crosses the plate the umpire shall end the top or the bottom inning, once the lead runner is stopped or can no longer advance. (i.e. Catcher standing on home plate)

The Mercy Rule will be in affect as follows: 12 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings, and 8 runs after 5 innings.

Courtesy runners may be used only for the pitcher and/or catcher at any time and shall be the last completed at bat. In the event the last batted player was a pitcher or catcher then the previous completed at bat player must be used.

- I. **PITCHING DISTANCE**
 - 6u, 8u, and 10u will pitch from a 35' distance from home plate*
 - 12u will pitch from a 40' distance from home plate*
 - 16u will pitch from a 43' distance from home plate*

- III. **OFFICIAL GAME TIMES:**
 - 8u and 10u 1:15 or 6 innings (no drop dead time rule)*
 - 12u and 16u 1:15 or 6 innings (no drop dead time rule)*

- IV. **All Bases for all age groups are set to 60FT.**

- V. **GCGSA approved balls will be USSSA .47 core leather optic softball**
 - (a) *6U, 8U & 10U – will use a 11”*
 - (b) *12U & 16U – will use a 12”*

All bats are required USSSA stamp / ASA stamp / ISF stamp or ISA stamp for league play.

If a game is tied at the end of regulation innings or after the time limit – the last batter called out in the previous inning will be placed on 2nd base for the start of each half inning. The game will continue until there is a winner. Interleague play has to have an outright victor, no ties interleague.

11.0 TROPHIES

Softball will purchase trophies, rings or medals for each league champion and runner up at the end of the season. Some teams will purchase team “participation” trophies for their players. The cost of participation trophies will be borne by individual teams and their members. All team parties are at the expense of the team and not the NYSA.

12.0 ALL-STAR SELECTION AND TOURNAMENT

The manager of the championship team in each league shall be entitled to manage the All Star team of his or her choosing in thier league, in the event the Manager declines it will go to the runner-up. The All Star manager will select coaches from among the managers and coaches of his league. All Star teams will consist of the number of players commensurate with the requirements of the affiliated league, not to exceed a maximum of thirteen players. Players selected with refusal to play will automatically forgo All Stars for the following season, this will also innediately disqualify the player from being picked up by any other team within the alliance for tournament play.

To be eligible for the participation in the All-Star tournament a player must have played a minimum of (2/3) two-thirds of the scheduled regular season games and be registered with the same park. Any girls(s) on a high school roster (freshman, JV, Varsity) for that season are not eligible to play in the tournament. No player that has reached the age of 18 will be able to participate in the tournament.

NYSA teams participating in All Star tournaments will be known by tournament officials as "Navarre". Teams will have a standard Navarre All Star logo across the chests of their uniforms or a 3" or larger NYSA patch on the outboard sleeve. Navarre's standard colors for the uniforms will be maroon / black / silver / gray / white, any variation of that must be approved by the Commisioner.

Players will be selected by a majority vote from each team. Players with the most votes will then be discussed with all coaches to ensure vote was made in good faith and not on popularity. All Stars will be announced and contacted by head coach of each age group.

Tournament entry fees will be paid for by the NYSA softball budget. Each player will also receive one uniform jersey provided by NYSA softball.

13.0 MID SEASON TOURNAMENT

Mid Season Tournament will be required for all teams to participate in. Mid Season location is selected by the GCGSA alliance. Roster shall consist of the drafted rec team. All tournament entry fees will be paid for by the NYSA softball funds.

14.0 UNIFORMS AND TEAM NAMES

I. Uniforms to be provided by the NYSA are to include 1 Jersey and 1 Pair of socks.

II. Spring Season – All teams will be known as the Navarre Raiders. Jerseys and socks will consist of color schemes matching Navarre colors (Maroon, Black, Silver, white, and Grey). Black pants will be worn by all teams. Uniforms will be selected by coaches and approved by the softball committee.

III. Fall Season – Fall season jerseys and socks can be customized along with team names. If uniforms are bought by the rec team, softball fees will be adjusted no more than a credit of \$30 per player. This is to allow coaches to make selections while keeping program fees fair.

15. FIELD MAINTENANCE

Prior to the start of each season, a field cleanup day will be mandatory for all coaches and players. Field Maintenance will be performed by coaches and assistant coaches. Clean up will be performed by all other members. The commissioner will oversee field clean up day.

All coaches are allowed access to rakes, gators, field drags and all hand tools in the softball maintenance shed. Coaches are NOT ALLOWED access to the lawn mower or tractor without commissioner approval.

Commissioner will seek approval from the board of directors for all maintenance equipment rentals

16. SOFTBALL COMMITTEE

The softball committee will be assembled by the commissioner at the start of the 2021 – 2022 season. It will consist of 3-8 members of NYSA. (1 per age group is ideal) The commissioner will chair the meeting as a non voting member. If the committee votes end in a tie, the commissioner will be responsible to break it.

Softball Committee responsibilities will be:

- i. Select coaches based on all bios for the rec and select rec programs. Committee will take into consideration all returning coaches and then new requested coaches
- ii. Select end of season awards
- iii. Discuss and help manage all softball finances
- iv. Plan and prepare for any tournaments held at NYSA
- v. Report all field issues and help facilitate repair options. The commissioner will escalate all major repairs to the board of directors.
- vi. Seek sponsors for the softball program (including all members of the program)
- vii. Request equipment and park improvement ideas
- viii. Discuss all minor issues, any issues requiring board of directors will be brought up at a monthly board meeting by the commissioner
- ix. Meet before, after, and once monthly, during both the fall and spring seasons.
- x. Discuss and add additional or remove additional by-laws for the program. (board of directors will have to approve final changes)

If a member resigns from the committee, the committee will vote on the selection of a new member.

17.0 COMMISSIONERS RESPONSIBILITIES

These duties shall include responsibility for overall league management and include but are not limited to the following:

- (a) Deliver managerial nominations to the Board;*
- (b) Direct player tryouts and help facilitate drafts;*

- (c) *Oversee the all-star selection process, to include the coordination of affidavit verification, completion of rosters and medical waivers, and coordination of practice field usage and other tournament preparation issues as necessary;*
- (d) *Collect team and player financial obligations collection from managers;*
- (e) *Ensure team participation in planned playing field upkeep;*
- (f) *Communicate with managers on pertinent park issues; Resolve minor concerns and conflicts and refer major conflicts to the Board of Directors.*
- (h) *Process game protests;*
- (i) *Enforce the rules and regulations under which their games are played;*
- (j) *Schedule, coordinate, and direct preseason coaching clinics to be conducted after player selection as is practical. Coordinate external facilities and trainers.*
- (k) *Ensure make up games are scheduled with teams and umpires.*
- (l) *Support the softball committee on pertinent issues; resolve minor issues.*
- (m) *Provide financial budgets to NYSA treasurerer*
- (n) *Order uniforms as required for season*
- (o) *provide initial set up of the "team manager app" for all communication*
- (p) *Report all major field maintenance issues to the board of directors and fix minor repairs as needed*
- (q) *Chair the softball committee as a non voting member unless tie breaker is required on softball business*
- (r) *Schedule usage of the fields*
- (s) *All other responsibilities listed in additional sections of these by-laws*

18.0 Navarre Raiders Elite (Select Rec Program)

Rec "Select" will consist of a highly competitive team by age groups; outside of All-Stars that will follow the same regulations (exception-pla exception-playing will enter under an agreement of what is expected; along with coach expectations in accordance with NYSA rulings.)

Navarre teams participating in Rec "Select" tournaments will be known by tournament officials as "Navarre Lady Raiders" or "Navarre Raiders Elite". Teams will have a standard Navarre logo across the chests of their uniforms or a 3" or larger Navarre patch on the outboard sleeve. Navarre's standard colors for the uniforms will be maroon / black / silver / white or gray, any variation of that must be approved by the Commisioner.

Players – All players must be registered for the season as a rec player to be eligible for select rec. Select Rec players should be held to a higher standards as they are promoting the NYSA at tournaments. All players are eligible for select rec as long as membership is current. All memebbers will also play a normal rec schedule with the understanding select rec is a privlage and will incur additional costs. All players will be provided a copy of these costs and sign a contract acknowledging they agree to the costs. Parents will also be required to sign the same contract. Coaches may add additional requirements to the contract, once approved by the commishioner. If a player fails to meet the obligations, they may be removed from select rec with a coach recommendation, committee approval, and notification to the commishioner.

Coaches – Coaches (head and assistants) will need to submit a bio emailed to softball@nysasports.com. Each bio will be submitted to the softball committee and voted on to approce

coaches. Once approved by the committee, the board will bring coach suggestions to the board for final approval. All NYSA members are eligible to coach Select Rec. Background checks will also be required for all members who enter the field. Select Coaches will not be allowed to coach or assist rec teams unless they have prior committee approval.

Tryouts and open practices – All practices before the start of a scheduled season must be approved by the commissioner. Practices will remain open to all yearly membership holders and cannot be closed practices until the official start of each NYSA softball season. Tryouts may happen before season start with commissioner approval. Once the season starts, one additional tryout is mandatory to ensure all players have been given an opportunity to tryout. If a player is selected to select rec prior to season start, they will register for the upcoming season within 72 hours on nysasports.com. Coaches will be responsible for notification of roster addition after the tryout. If a player fails to register for NYSA's rec softball before the deadline, they will immediately be removed from Select Rec rosters and lose eligibility for the current season.

Tournament selection – All tournaments will be select rec tournaments unless commissioner approval is given for class C. GCS is the official tournament directors and should be the primary tournament hosts. USFA and USSSA should be a secondary option and will require additional registrations, to be completed by the commissioner. Commissioner approval will be required to play USFA and USSSA.

Equipment – All equipment, (balls, hitting nets, tees, etc.) will be budgeted by each coach. Property will belong to NYSA and remain at the park in a designated shed unless traveling to a tournament. Coach will ensure all property is returned to the shed within 72 hours of tournament ending. Teams may share equipment to cut costs. All equipment that is damaged or lost must be reported within 24 hours.

Field Maintenance – Select Rec will follow the same maintenance requirements as NYSA rec.

Budget – a budget must be submitted prior to the start of the fall and spring season by each head coach of each respective age group. The budget will have a listing of all tournaments, uniforms, equipment, and any other additional expenses. It will also include a projected income source. Fundraising is allowed but will need submitted to the commissioner to insure board of directors' approval is given. All payments for expenses must be made by the NYSA treasurer via a check or credit card purchase. The commissioner will facilitate all payments with the Treasurer. Pay-at-the-plate tournaments must be annotated on the budget and are the exception to check and credit cards payments with prior commissioner approval. The commissioner will be given all deposits of fees and fundraising funds within 72 hours of receiving them.

Uniforms – Uniforms can be selected by the select coaches but will require commissioner approval before purchasing. Please refer to the spring uniform section for further guidance.

Field Usage – Select Rec will be given a fair practice schedule based on field availability. Rec will take priority on scheduling for practices and games. Sunday will be a rest day for fields. All requested field usage must be submitted using the team manager app. A coaches group will be used for these requests.

Official communication – All official communication must channel through the commissioner. Commissioners phone number and official NYSA email will be listed on all select rec promotional material. Social media will be owned by the commissioner, with coaches having full access to the site as admins. Social media pages can be requested to help promote NYSA.