

Pace Athletic and Recreation Association, Inc.

Girls Softball League Rules and Regulations Revised January 2005

PARA Softball Rules

This document comprises a summary of the rules and regulations for the Softball League at PARA. The By-Laws and Rules Committee compiled and edited these for the **2005** season and has been approved by the Board of Directors. The following is intended to supplement the Pace Athletic and Recreation Association, Inc. By-Laws.

This League uses the official playing rules of the Northwest Florida Girls Softball Alliance (NWFLGSA) and the National Softball Association (NSA) except for rules excerpted at local league option in these Rules and Regulations and the PARA By-Laws.

Eligibility

- A) Playing Age Group** – Player age group will be as follows: 8U, 10U, 12U and 16U. The number of players registering to play will determine the number of teams in each age group.
- B) Playing Age** – Player age group will be determined by the age of the girl as of December 31st of each year.
- C) Birth Certificates** – New players playing at PARA ballpark will not be permitted to play in any regulator season game until her birth certificate has been verified by a member of the Board of Directors and so noted on her registration form.
- D) Team Balancing** – Team will be balanced in numbers of players. Exceptions may occur due to the number of registrants.
- E) Age Quotes** – No team may have more than 8 (eight) players of any age group. Exceptions may occur due to the number of registrants.

Playing Format

- A) **Girls Age 8 and Under** – Girls in the 8U age group will play Coach Pitch Softball.
- B) **Girls Age 9 and Older** – Girls playing softball in the 10U, 12U and 16U age group will play Fast-pitch Softball.
- C) **Softball Size** – Girls 8U and 10U will play with an 11” **47** core ball. Girls 12U and 16U will play with a 12” **47** core ball.

Obligations

- A) **Presence at Opening Day Ceremonies** – All teams shall be present at the opening day ceremonies. This is where our County Commissioners and Team Sponsors are recognized for their support at our ballpark. All teams will be asked to stay until all teams and sponsors have been recognized.
- B) **Team Obligation** – Each team will be required to help in a fund raiser, participate in game work duty and also be responsible for getting team sponsors.
- C) **Team Trophies** – The park purchases trophies for each league champion at the end of the season. The league commissioners will hand out these trophies at their last game. Individual teams may purchase team “participation” trophies for their players at their cost.
- D) **Softball Equipment** – The park will also provide batting helmets and catcher equipment to each team. All park issued equipment must be returned to the league Equipment Director or league Commissioner by the date set by the Board of Directors. Any coach who does not return their equipment will not be allowed to coach the following year. The park will purchase league game balls for each team and issues them to the team managers through the league commissioner. The number of balls issued to teams relates roughly to the number of games scheduled for the year. The home team for each game is responsible for providing two (one for 8U) new game balls for the game (which the team retains after the game).
- E) **Field Preparation and Clean up** – It is the responsibility of the **early**

and late home team to have the playing field ready for play. It is the responsibility of the home team to insure that all equipment is put away if their game is the last game of the evening. It shall be the responsibility of both teams to pick up the trash and garbage around the fields at the end of the game. Teams with the final game of the evening have ultimate responsibility for condition of their side of the playing field to include trash and garbage around the field, in the dugouts, and the bleachers as well as empty trash cans into the dumpster. Teams failing to do this could be subject to forfeiting their next winning game. This policy will be enforced by the Board Member on duty and League Commissioner.

F) Score Keepers - It will be the responsibility of the visiting team to have an official scorekeeper. The scorekeeper shall maintain the scorebook and keep score at the designated area of their league. The scorekeeper shall remain neutral in spite of their team affiliation. The score keeper's responsibility includes:

1. If a game is protested or play suspended, the scorekeeper 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 of the batter.
2. The scorekeeper shall not make any decision conflicting with affiliated official playing rules, P.A.R.A. By- Laws or Regulations, or with an umpire's decision.
3. The scorekeeper 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 or be involved in any ruling conflict.
4. The scorekeeper shall record and keep the official time of the game and notify when the time limit has been met.
5. The scorekeeper must use the official scorebook and all games must reflect both team names, date, and final score.

Note: Failure of the visiting team to provide a scorekeeper will result in the forfeiture of that game to the home team. This policy will be enforced by the league Commissioner.

G) Managing A Team - Managers desiring to coach a Girls Softball Team must submit a written request to the Softball Vice President. The Softball Vice President will submit all coaches and managers to the P.A.R.A. Board of Directors for approval. All managers and coaches must be members in good standing of the Association. Managers are selected for specific teams in the following order.

1. Returning Manager to his/her Team
2. Asst Coach who wants to take same team he/she coached the year before
3. Manager coming up from the league below
4. Others who request a team
5. Teams will be assigned on or after August 01 for the next year.

H) If in the event a parent of a player who was on a team in the same league and is considered a returning player in willing to become a **Head coach** of a team in the same league, and the team that that player is on is not available because it already has a head coach. Then that parent might be allowed to coach another team in the league. This rule will only be considered if coaches are needed in that age group On draft day, the coach's daughter will be traded to his team for a player of comparable ability to be determined by the Softball commissioner.

Game Rules

A) In the 8U, 10U, 12U and 16U league the batting procedures will be the same , which is that each player must play at least one (1) full inning on defense and all players on the roster will bat the entire game. The umpire and the opposing coach must be notified of the reason should any player be held out from playing. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in forfeiture of the game. If a player is injured or becomes sick after a game has started an out will not be charged until the number of players drop below nine.

B) All substitutions and re entry's shall be reported to the official scorekeeper and opposing team's scorekeeper. 16U, 12U, 10U, and 8U will be allowed free substitution for the entire game. Any player who shows up late to the game will be placed at the bottom of the batting order. This procedure will not be implemented in any all-star game in this league.

- C) Time Limits** - No new inning will commence after 1hr. 30 minutes (1hr. 20 minutes for 8U) has elapsed except in the case of a tie score. Tie games shall be played to a conclusion, using a tie - breaker rule as defined by NSA (Section 11 Article 209 H). The last out of the inning constitutes the start of a new inning. All games will be 7 inning or 1:30 minute time limit. A complete game will be 5 innings or 4 1/2 if home team is winning for 10U, 12U & 16U. 8U is 6 inning and complete game will be 4 inning or 3 1/2 if home team is winning.
- D) Inning Defined** - One complete inning will consist of three outs for each team.
- E) Run Rule** - The ten run rule is in effect after five innings (four and one half if home team is ahead).
- F) High School Players** - Any player who is a member of a high school softball team may participate in P.A.R.A. Girls Softball, but will not be eligible for any NWFGSA sponsored tournament.

G) All players must wear approved helmet face-guards to play softball.

Note: Careful consideration will be given when placing high school players because multiple high school participation on one team could render a team ineligible for participation in NWFGSA tournaments.

- H) Game Postponement** - The decision to postpone games before the game commences will be made first by the P.A.R.A. Board member on duty, then the league Commissioner and then by the Park President. In the event none of these directors or officers is present, any attending Board Member will make the decision. The primary responsibility resides with the Board member on duty. After commencement of game, the decision will be made by the umpires. Appropriate time must be allowed from the time the game is stopped before the game is terminated by the umpires. The Board Member on duty or the League Commissioner will have the final say. You must attempt to reschedule your game within a week or it will not be rescheduled.
- I) Rain Delays** - 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.

- J) Rescheduled Games** - Rescheduled games will be played on the following Wednesday.
- K) Shortened Games** - Games shortened by the time limit shall be regulation, regardless of the number of inning played.
- L)** If a team is one or more players short at game time, the opposing manager can select one or more players from his/her roster (but not to drop his/her roster below nine players) to bring the deficient team up to nine players. In the event the opposing team can't offer, the managers will agree on a substitute or substitutes from the stands to bring the deficient team to nine players. In the event that both teams are deficient, but neither team having fewer than seven players, both teams may enlist the services of mutually agreed upon substitutes. A coach can pick a player in the lower age group without having to get the approval of the opposing team.
- M)** The league championship will be awarded to the team having the best record of the scheduled league games. If there is a tie for either the best record or second place at the end of the season, the two teams will play a one game play off . If there is a three-way tie at the end of the regular season a play off with a draw for seeding will be played.

Tournament Exception: This requirements does not apply to tournaments and games that are outside the PARA league schedule. In such instances, tournaments rules apply.

FIELD RULES

The following is intended to supplement and enhance already established local rules of play with current association NW Florida Girls Softball Alliance.

- 1.** If a fair ball goes through the fence or gates (out of the park), the batter receives a ground rule double.
- 2.** If a thrown ball goes into the dugout or under the coach's bench, the runner(s) will advance to the next base. This means the one he/she is going to plus the next base.

3. Coaches and managers are the only people, other than the players, allowed on the field. Coaches may remain outside the dugout on both offense and defense as long as they stay in a three foot box in front of the dugout.
4. There shall be only four names allowed on a league roster as coaches: one (1) manager and three (3) assistant coaches.

PROTEST

- 1) A protest which involves an umpire's judgment call can not be protested.
- 2) Only the manager or the acting manager shall be authorized to submit a protest. No other person(s) protest will be considered.
- 3) A protest must be submitted in writing within forty-eight (48) hours from the completion of the game being protested to the league commissioner. There will be a \$50.00 protest fee whenever a protest is turned in. If the manager wins the protest, he will be refunded the protest fee. If the protest is denied, the protest fee will not be refunded.
- 4) All protests must be signed by the protesting manager.
- 5) The league commissioner will present the protest to the next meeting of the Board of Directors of PARA for review.
- 6) The Board of Directors of PARA will review the reasons for the protest and by a majority vote support or reject the protest.
- 7) If the Board should reject the protest there will be no higher appeal. The protest will be declared null and void.
- 8) If the Board should support the protest, the Board will on their majority vote decide a means to resolve the protest.
- 9) The only legal protest shall be one which involves a violation of playing rules or the use of an ineligible player or an illegal pitcher.

- 10) The protesting manager, on a play situation, shall notify the umpire that he/she is protesting before another pitch is thrown. The umpire shall be required to announce that the game is being played under protest (but failure of the umpire to make this announcement does not affect the validity of the protest).
- 11) After the completion of a game, there shall be no protest regardless of the circumstances involved with the exception of a protest on eligibility or failure to comply with the participation requirement.

TEAM FROZEN PLAYER RULE

Parks that are members of the NWFGSA including PARA must meet the following criteria:

- Park by-laws that includes an active draft system which allows a maximum of four (4) player protects (i. e. freezes, options, recruits, coaches daughter, picks) to an established team at the time of the draft. Established teams are defined by players returning from the previous season within an age group. Players moving up in an age group are not considered returning players. Freeze forms must be signed by both the coach and parent and turned into the league commissioner before the coaches meeting prior to the draft.
- You must freeze all sisters if you intent to freeze one. This is the only way that we can guarantee that they are on the same team. When a sister is coming up to an established team in a new league, that coach must also freeze her if other is already on his/her team to insure that they are on the same team.
- Expansion teams are defined as teams formed due to an increase in registered players or by the decrease of the number of registered players within a park. An Expansion team formed during the week prior to the draft will be allowed to evaluate and freeze players on draft day.
- Teams will be limited to freezes on draft day if they have more than 6 returning players. A team can only have a maximum of 10 players on their roster on draft day. (If you have 8 returners, you only get 2 freezes).

Note: A manager must take his own child as a frozen player unless the manager indicates in writing that he desires his child to play on another team other than his own.

DRAFTING PROCEDURES-PLAYER ASSIGNMENTS

- 1) The draft will be a Pro style draft and no points will be used. Team with the least amount of player will choose first, all coaches with the same numbers of players will draw a number for seat rotation. Once all teams with the lowest number have drafted, teams will draft again in the order. Teams will not get a draft pick until the teams drafting have reached their level of players. Once you enter the draft, you go to chair one and all others drop back one. Draws will be by seat number 1.2.3.4 etc.
- 2) No team can come to the draft with more than 6 players of the highest age group unless they are all returning players.
- 3) Players that do not come to tryouts will not be on the draft list and will be placed in the hat to be drawn at the end of the draft.
- 4) If a coach pick's a sister, then any other sister in the draft in that league will automatically become the next pick in the draft for that team.
- 5) A player not wanting to return to their team from a previous year, will be place in a hat and no one will be allow to draft this player. This rule is only to allow players to change teams when there was a problem the year before (i.e. did not get along with a coach). Parents must contact the Softball Vice President and explain the reason before this will be allowed. Returning players not signed up by the last regular scheduled registration day will be placed in the hat. All hat picks will be done last, after the selection process is completed.
- 6) If an established team is folded before the draft due to decease in players in that age group, those returning players will be placed into the draft. They cannot be frozen. It is up to the Softball Commissioners to decide which team will be folded. Teams with out

a coach will be folded first, followed by teams with the least amount of returning players.

- 7) There will be no spectators allowed during the drafting process. The meeting room doors will be closed with no admittance to anyone not directly involved with the draft in process. There shall be one assistant coach per team allowed to be present with the Manager during the draft.
- 8) All players signing up after the initial draft will be assigned to the team that are next in order to receive a player.
- 9) The Softball vice-president or another designated Board Member will conduct drafts for all Softball leagues. The Commissioner of each league will assist in conducting the draft, unless he/she is managing a team in that league.

SOFTBALL ALL STAR PROCEDURES

PARA wants to choose an All Star team that is competitive while still maintaining fairness to the children, parents and our community. Our objective is to choose a team of players who have earned the right to be named Pace All Stars. These players will be chosen fairly and democratically.

ALL STAR TEAM SELECTIONS

- 1) League commissioner and Softball Vice President will oversee all All-star selections.
- 2) PARA will send a Team from each division (8U, 10U, 12U, and 16U).
- 3) All Star players will be picked by all coaches in a league. The unanimous players go on All Stars first, the next highest vote will go second, next highest will go third, etc.
- 4) Each team will carry at least eleven players, nine who were voted to be all-stars, plus two coach's options, if the coach wants to pick up more players, that is their option. The maximum number of players

per team will be fourteen. If a second team is being picked, we will limit the first team to 11 players.

- 5) All Pace All Star teams will wear uniforms of Pace colors with "PACE" in big letters across the front of the shirt along with a Pace hat.
- 6) Players will be selected by secret ballot of all managers.
- 7) The league 1st place manager gets his choice of teams. Second place manager gets the other team if a second team is selected. If one of these managers does not want a team then the 3rd place manager steps in or the 4th and so on. It must be a manager of a team in the league to be considered for the all star head coach.
- 8) This system will be used in all softball leagues.
- 9) All Star committee can have alternate players in place if needed.

Official P.A.R.A. Park Rules

Obligations

- A) Operating Expenses - P.A.R.A. is a non-profit organization that raises its funds through several primary means: sponsorships, registration fee, fund raisers, and concession revenues.
- B) Registration Fee: The registration fee is a nominal fee charged to cover operating expenses, equipment, and umpires not covered by other fund raiser. The registration fee is set by the Board of Directors and is due on registration day.
- C) Team Obligation - Each team will be required to help in a fund raiser, participate in game day duty and also be responsible for getting team sponsors.
- D) Concession Workers - Each team must provide up to 5 workers every time the team is scheduled to work the concession stand. If less than 5 workers report for duty, the team will forfeit its next winning game and reimburse the park for workers. The Board member on duty will notify the League Commissioner of a team's

failure to meet its obligation. The Commissioner will enforce this policy. Anyone under the age of 15 must be approved by the Concession Stand Manager.

- E)** Work Day - Work days will be scheduled for all teams to make needed repairs to their fields. Commissioners will contact team managers and each team must provide two parents from each team. Teams that do not provide parents will not be allowed to schedule practice time of PARA fields and can be subject to forfeit of next winning game. The Commissioner will enforce this policy.
- F)** Maintaining Practice Fields and Bathrooms - This Park is run and maintained by volunteers (i.e., parents, grandparents etc.). At some time during the 2004 season, everyone will be needed to volunteer for work days, pick up trash and / or clean the bathroom facilities. However, if we do not get volunteers, assignments will have to be made.
- G)** Sportsmanship - While the Board of Directors recognizes that managers and coaches will make mistakes in their handling of situations on occasion and that the “ heat of the moment “ will evoke strong reactions to on the field conditions, the Board will not provide implicit or explicit approval of 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 or precipitate fights or other physical confrontations will be grounds for Board action the offending manager, coach, or player. The board holds managers ultimately accountable for the conduct of his team’s fans and officials.
- H)** Safety - For safety and liability reason, no persons under the age of fifteen are authorized inside the concession stand during its operating hours. All members of the Park are encouraged to stop any unsafe activity they witness or bring it to the attention of a Board Member. Board Members shall take swift and decisive action to prevent unsafe practices and violations of Park Rules.
- I)** Commissioners will have a meeting with all managers to cover all Park and League Rules. All managers must sign a form which shows that they understand and will obey these rules thought-out the season.

- J)** Managers will have a meeting with parents before the first scheduled practice to go over rules of conduct for players and coaches.
- K)** Smoking or use of any tobacco product shall not be allowed by anyone while on the field. Managers, Coaches and players shall not be allowed the use of any tobacco during their game. First offense will constitute suspension of managing and / or coaching the next scheduled ball game. Second offense could result in dismissal of position.
- L)** No Alcoholic beverages will be allowed on the premises by anyone.
- M)** Food - Managers and Head Coaches are allowed to bring drinks & fruit for the players only. Spectators are NOT allowed to bring any food items or beverages into the park. Please understand that this applies to all other parks as well.
- N)** Pets - For the safety of all, no pets of any kind are allowed on PARA premises.
- O)** There will be no warm-ups on any field prior to a game if the warm-ups will run into the scheduled playing time.
- P)** All managers are responsible in seeing that they do not delay the progress of a ball game with their coaching techniques.
- Q)** Please note there will be a \$25.00 service charge for any returned checks.
- R)** Grievances - If a member of PARA has any problems or concerns with their coach, team or park rules they should follow these procedures:
 - 1. Talk it over with your team manager or head coach.
 - 2. Talk to your league commissioner.
 - 3. Talk with your Softball Vice President.
 - 4. Bring your problem or concern to the Monthly Board Meeting. This meeting is the 1st Wed. of each month.

Managers and Coaches

- A) Approval of Managers -** Managers and Head Coaches are approved by the Board of Directors and serve at the pleasure 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 fields. In this respect, managers and coaches are park officials who represent the President and the Board of Directors on the playing field. All persons interested in a managerial position must submit a written letter to the Softball Vice President who will review them and assign teams. All coaches will be taken before the Board of Directors for a vote of acceptance.

- B) Coaches -** All team managers and head coaches must nominate coaches that will be assisting them during the season for approval by the Board of Directors. **COACHES MUST BE APPROVED BY THE Board of Directors** prior to commencement of league play. Managers are ultimately responsible for the actions of their coaching staff.

- C) Background Checks -** All Managers and Coaches will have a background check performed to protect our children as much as possible.

Conduct

- A) If a player throws any equipment the umpire will issue a warning to the manager. If any player throws any equipment thereafter, that player will be ejected from the game.**

- B) If any manager has a problem with a player or parent, which he/she cannot resolve, he/she will submit the problem to the league commissioner first before submitting same to the PARA Board.**

- C) Conduct of managers and coaches will be in accordance with the By-Laws of the Association and league participation rules as established, or they will be subject to dismissal.**

- D) Managers are responsible for their team and/or parents' behavior at practice, games and any other event sponsored by PARA.**

E) Managers and Coaches must show good conduct on and off the field at all times.

F) Rules: It is a coach's responsibility not only to teach the activity but to be a positive role model for his team and the opposing team. This rule is presented as a deterrent to insure that our coaches as well as parents and players provide an example of class and sportsmanship to all children who participate in our programs. This rule concerns coaches and parents being ejected (removed) from an activity sponsored by PARA. It will be the umpire's discretion when they should remove a coach and/or parent from a game.

1. One (1) ejection will equal a \$50.00 fine and a 3 game suspension. (May include suspension from the park.)
2. On the 2nd ejection the coach and/or parent will be suspended for the remainder of the season (may include the entire park) and it will be a board decision as to his/her status as a coach the following year.

Appeal

Coaches may appeal the suspension and fine, by filing a written appeal within 24 hours to a board member and/or league commissioner. All fines and suspensions will be levied after the PARA Board of Directors has made a decision as to if suspension and fine are deemed appropriate.

PARA GIRLS U-8 SOFTBALL RULES

All rules of regular NSA Softball will apply with the following exceptions:

- 1) Girls coach-pitch will be played on fields with the following dimensions:
 - Bases will be 50 feet in length
 - Pitching mound will be 35 feet
- 2) Bats used in coach pitch will be stamped with "Official Softball" if possible with a maximum barrel diameter of 2-1/4".

- 3)** Coaches will be allowed to remain outside of the dugout as long as they remain in a coach's box directly in front of their dugout. (This will enable coaches to better instruct their kids).
- 4)** On defense, one coach can stand behind the home plate area, to assist the catcher in retrieving the ball. In addition, NSA rules allow one coach in the outfield to set the outfielders.
- 5)** Playing time is 1 hour and 20 minutes from the time of the first pitch, or when the umpire signals play ball.
- 6)** U-8 plays free substitution. All players who are present for a game must play at least one inning in the field and hit every time through the order. A team must have at least 9 players in their lineup or they must take the out.
- 7)** U-8 will play 6/9 rule, inning will be over after 3 outs, or on the batter where the 6 run scores. Once time has been called on the play when the 6th run scores, the inning is over. Maximum hitters in an inning is 11(a hitter can hit twice if you are hitting less than 11).
- 8)** If the bases are loaded, and there are two outs, and a batter or a base runner is forced out, no runs should score on the play.
- 9)** The coach pitcher is allowed 5 warm-up pitches between innings, or when a new pitcher is brought into the game.
- 10)** A batter will get a maximum of 6 pitches or three swinging strikes. No player will be out on a foul ball unless caught by a fielder.
- 11)** A game will be 6 innings, with the run rule in effect after 4 (12 runs head after 4, or 10 runs head after 5).
- 12)** A chalk mark will be placed 20 feet from each base. If in the opinion of the umpire, a runner has passed that mark when the umpire calls time out, a runner will be awarded the next base. If the runner is at the line, or has not yet passed the line, the runner must return to the previous base.
- 13)** The coach pitcher is not part of the field. In the event that a hit ball strikes the coach pitcher, it will considered a no-pitch and will not

count against the batters 6 pitches. If a throw strikes the coach pitcher, time will be called.

- 14)** The coach pitcher can pitch anywhere between the mound and the front of the circle.
- 15)** The infield fly rule is not in effect.
- 16)** NSA Coach-pitch softball is played with 10 fielders (4 of who are in the outfield). All outfielders must remain at least 15 feet behind the base lines.
- 17)** No player can play closer than 30 feet from home plate until after the ball is hit.
- 18)** Girls Pitcher can play anywhere from the pitching mound back, as long as they are within the pitching circle. NSA rules allow a coach to move his pitcher behind 2nd base if he feels it is a safety issue.
- 19)** Pitching circle is a 16-foot circle around the pitcher's mound. 8 feet in each direction from the mound.
- 20)** Runners will not leave the base until the ball is hit.
- 21)** One time out per inning per team. (Exception is for an injury: Time will be called immediately and all runners will advance to the base they were in route to and stop.)
- 22)** Time will be called by the umpire when one of the following occurs:
 - The player-pitcher has control of the ball in the circle
 - The lead runner is stopped from advancing by a fielder
 - Any infielder makes an attempt to return the ball to the coach pitcher.

Managers and Coaches Form

I, the undersigned, have read and received a copy of the **PARK and LEAGUE RULES**. I also understand that by signing, I am agreeing to follow each of the above rules. Failure to adhere to the above rules could result in **discipline** which will be set by the Board of Directors.

Manager Name : _____

Date: _____

Coach: _____

Date: _____

Coach: _____

Date: _____

Coach: _____

Date: _____

League Commissioner: _____

Date: _____