

THE SOFTBALL CODE OF THE
SOUTH FLORIDA AMATEUR ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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SECTION 1
General

- 1.01 Purpose:** The South Florida Amateur Athletic Association (SFAAA) Softball Code shall provide the operational procedures for all league games.
- 1.02 Governing Rules:** All SFAAA league games will be played under the SFAAA Softball Code with reference to the current year's ASA Code and the Mills Pond Softball Adult Athletic League Code of Conduct or any conduct rules of an alternate park where SFAAA games are played for game rules not covered in the SFAAA Softball Code.
- 1.03** The Association will hold annually a season which shall be designated as the qualifying season. Said qualifying season shall meet the requirements as established in the NAGAAA Instruments of Governance.

SECTION 2
League Structure

- 2.01 Formation:** The Association consists of an Open Division of amateur softball players which has no restriction on the sex or gender of the participant. Participants must be 18 years of age.
- 2.02 Divisions:**
- A. Teams may compete in the following divisions based on their NAGAAA Player and Team Ratings (See Appendix A):
1. "A" Division:
 - a. All teams rated 270 or lower.
 - b. No Open division team on a roster with a cumulative rating lower than 170 is allowed to play in the A Division.
 2. "B" Division:
 - a. All teams rated 185 or lower.
 - b. No players rated over 22 are allowed.
 3. "C" Division:
 - a. All teams rated 145 or lower.
 - b. No players rated over 15 are allowed.
 4. "D" Division:
 - a. All teams rated 105 or lower.
 - b. No players rated over 11.
- B. During non-qualifying season, the Board may group the A & B division teams and refer to them as the Upper Division.

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SECTION 3
Team Rosters

- 3.01 Team Rosters:** A team roster must consist of at least 10 active players but no more than 18 active players. There is no roster limit on non-players. No active player may appear as an active player on two or more rosters at the same time in any given season.
- 3.02 Submittal:** The official team roster and player fees must be submitted to the Board prior to the start of said team's first game of league play.
- 3.03 Player Additions:** Additions of new players to a team may be made by submitting an add/drop form together with the player fee at any time during the season. Any Board member must be notified of the addition before the game in which the new player is permitted to play in order to collect the fee and make a determination of skill level. If a player is added to a roster after the team has played more than half of their scheduled games, the player fee shall be reduced to equal that of the non-player.
- A. In qualifying seasons, a player may not be added to a team's roster after 60 percent of the team's regular season games have been played. The 60 percent calculation is to be rounded up to the next whole number. However, should a team's active roster falls below 10 players, a player may be added in an attempt to preserve the viability of that team.
 - B. In non-qualifying seasons, a player may be added at any point during the season. However, a player must still play in the required number of games in order to be eligible for the post season playoffs.
 - C. In either season, should a heterosexual player be added to a roster, their name should be forwarded to a League official to ensure compliance with the gay heterosexual rule as established in this softball code.
 - D. All new players to the Association who shall not have a current NAGAAA rating must be rated prior to playing in a league game. In the event that a player who has already been rated by another league according to the NAGAAA rating system seeks to be added to a roster through whatever means, the player's rating, if having been done within a year of their request addition, shall be considered a valid rating.
 - E. Any games played by a player whose rating has not been verified or been determined by SFAAA may result in the forfeiture of those gamers and further disciplinary action by the League.
- 3.04 Player Transfers:** A player may, upon notification to the Board and to the team that he or she is leaving, change teams no later than the start of the team's third scheduled game. After the start of the team's third game, any player roster changes must be approved by a majority vote of all members of the managers council in that division. No players may transfer more than once in any given season.

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Players drafted in the new player draft may transfer only with the consent of the manager of the team which drafted them and the approval of a majority vote of the managers council in that division.

- 3.05 Injured Players:** A team can replace an injured player with another player on the roster provided the player will no longer return for the rest of the season. A statement from the player may be required. The new player will still be required to pay the appropriate player fee and meet playoff eligibility requirements.
- 3.06 Replacement Players:** Teams may replace players on a roster with new players if a player will no longer return during that season either by injury or relocation. A player that has moved may request a refund, but must provide proof of moving. Replacement players will still be required to pay the appropriate player fee and meet playoff eligibility requirements. The replacement player shall take one of the 18 spots on the active player roster for the duration of the season.
- 3.07 New Teams:** A team shall be considered a new team if its opening day roster contains 5 or fewer players from the previous season's roster.
- 3.08 Heterosexual Players:** There is no limitation on the number of heterosexual players on a team's roster; however, there is the following limitation on how many can be on the field (including extra hitters) at any given time during an SFAAA game:
- A. "A" and "B" Divisions: A team may have no more than three heterosexual players (including extra hitters) on the field at any given time during a game but may not start the game with nine players where three of them are heterosexual players.
 - B. "C" and "D" Divisions: A team may have no more than two heterosexual players (including extra hitters) on the field at any given time during a game.

SECTION 4
New Players

- 4.01 New Player:** Each season, the Association shall hold a recruitment drive to recruit new players. The new players that attend the draft shall be separated by their desire and ability and shall, upon being rated, be drafted by the SFAAA teams.
- 4.02 Draft Order:** The first team to draft a player in each league division shall be the team finishing lowest in the standings in the prior season with the next to last finisher drafting next and so on until all teams have had a chance to draft. New teams or teams moving up a division shall be considered for having the first pick of the draft at the discretion of the Board.
- 4.03 Drafted Players:** Once a player has participated in the draft, they will not be allowed to be picked up by any team except under the aforementioned draft procedures. Any

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player drafted will not be allowed to play with any team other than the one that drafted them for that respective season without the consent of the manager of the drafting team and the approval of the managers council for the division to which the player will go.

- 4.04 Disciplinary Action:** Managers or coaches of any team attempting to circumvent the draft are subject to disciplinary action by the Board and/or the Ethics Committee.

**SECTION 5
Manager Responsibilities**

- 5.01 Team Manager Responsibilities:** The following are responsibilities afforded to the manager of a team participating in the League play of the SFAAA. The manager or their designee shall be responsible for:

- A. representing his/her team at Managers Council Meetings. Managers may designate a representative from their team to attend a meeting provided they turn in a written proxy as described in the SFAAA Bylaws;
- B. reporting the results of the Managers Council Meetings back to their team;
- C. collecting and submitting to the Board a player roster, sponsor and player fees, insurance waivers and all documents as prescribed by the Board for the upcoming season;
- D. submitting a fully completed lineup card to the opposing team's manager before each game;
- E. turning in team game results and lineup cards to the Assistant Commissioners or as designated by the Board;
- F. maintaining that their team conducts itself in a level of good sportsmanship;
- G. informing the Board of any changes of managers on their team;
- H. notifying team sponsors of after game parties;
- I. communicating to the Board the bye weeks requested by the team for that season.
- J. distributing and maintaining all equipment, uniforms and marketing materials if the aforementioned are sponsor or team owned.

- 5.02 Manager Compliance:** Should a manger fail to uphold their responsibilities as established in 5.01, appropriate corrective action may be taken by the Board.

**SECTION 6
Uniforms**

- 6.01 Ownership:** Uniforms which are purchased by a sponsor or a team, shall remain the property of the sponsor or team unless other arrangements have been made and documented between the sponsor and the team member(s).

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- 6.02 Player Responsibility:** If property is deemed as belonging to a sponsor or team, each player is responsible for the return of his/her uniform to the team manager at the close of the playing season or at such time as the player discontinues, for whatever reason, his/her participation with that team. In the event that a player does not return his/her uniform in satisfactory condition, normal wear and tear expected, that player shall be ineligible for league play until the uniform is returned or other restitution is made to the satisfaction of the team or its sponsor. Requests for return of uniform(s) must be made prior to the next playing season.

SECTION 7
Forfeits

- 7.01 Team Forfeits:** A team will have forfeited a game if it:
- A. fails to submit all documentation, player fees and sponsor fees prior to the start of a season, or;
 - B. fails to have nine players on the field after 5 minutes past the game's starting time, or;
 - C. fails to continue to field at least nine players at any point of the game, or;
 - D. fields an ineligible player after the first pitch of the game has been delivered, or;
 - E. if the Board deems it necessary due to a failure of compliance with SFAAA Bylaws, Softball Code or any violation of the Ethics Code.
- 7.02 Forfeiture Penalties:**
- A. The forfeiting team shall receive a loss in the standings by a score of 0-10. A double forfeit shall be scored as 0-0 and considered a loss for both teams.
 - B. Forfeitures with more than 24-hour notice will result in a fine equal to the cost of umpiring for each game forfeited.
 - C. Forfeitures with less than 24-hour notice will result in a fine, a cost to be determined by the Board prior to the season.
 - D. All forfeiture fines need to be paid prior to the forfeiting team's next game. However, the forfeiting team may appeal to Board for special consideration and extenuating circumstances.
- 7.03 Team Expulsion:** A team that forfeits four games will no longer be eligible to participate in any SFAAA games for that season.
- A. All games played by that team will be eliminated from the standings and new win/loss standings determined.
 - B. Eligible players from a team that is no longer eligible to play in the SFAAA shall retain all privileges as a member of the SFAAA.
 - C. A special draft shall be administered by the Commissioner/Board in a timely fashion by which all teams within the suspended team's division are able to draft eligible players from that suspended team. The draft shall be conducted in reverse order of the newly defined standings.

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D. All games already played by the newly suspended players will be counted towards any playoff or Gay Softball World Series requirement.

7.04 Fines: Each season, the Board will determine if a fine will be assessed to a team for each forfeited game. In order for that team to play their next scheduled game, they must pay the fee to the Treasurer before the start of their next game.

SECTION 8
Game Rules

8.01 Game Regulations:

A. Game Length: An SFAAA game shall last seven innings or no more than a time limit set by the Board at the beginning of each season.

1. The League shall purchase and maintain a set of 8 audible timers to be utilized by umpires in order to maintain the consistency of the time allotment per game.
2. Any injury which stops play shall require a stoppage of the timer with said stoppage communicated to both managers.

B. Official Game: In the event of a rain-out or any unforeseen circumstance, a game shall be considered an official game after five (5) innings of play or four and one half (4½) if the home team leads.

C. Rainouts/Inclement Weather: If any game, including a playoff game, is called due to rain or inclement weather before the game becomes official, the game will be rescheduled and played in its entirety. The rainout/cancelled game shall not count towards any playoff or Gay Softball World Series requirement.

D. Tie games: If the score is tied after seven innings or after the time limit has expired, the game will be played using the Kansas City Tie Breaker format.

Under the Kansas City Tie Breaker format, each team, in their respective half of each subsequent inning, shall place on second base the player on their team who made the last recorded out. The team shall proceed by batting the next batter in the lineup at the prior inning's end and so forth until three outs are recorded. Each batter will start with a full count with no courtesy foul. This procedure is repeated in each subsequent inning until one team has outscored the other at the end of a completed inning.

E. Run Rule: A game shall cease and the score recorded as the final score if a team leads by 12 or more runs after five (5) innings or four and one half (4½) innings if the home team leads, or if a team leads by 20 or more runs after three (3) innings or two and one half (2½) if the home team leads.

8.02 Management of Team Lineup:

A. Requirement: A team must start the game and maintain at least nine rostered players on the field or a forfeit will be declared. A tenth player may be added

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- before the first pitch of the fifth inning. The tenth player will be inserted as the last batter on the lineup card.
- B. Extra Hitters: Only at the start of a game may a team may add an eleventh and twelfth player to the lineup and designate them as extra hitters. At any time during a game, the extra hitter(s) may enter and play defensively switching the defensive player to the extra hitter slot. Both players shall remain in the same batting order for the entire game.
 - C. Ejected Players: If a player is ejected or leaves the game for any reason and no substitute is available, the team may continue to play with at least nine players but will receive an out in the position of the ejected or vacated player.
 - D. Injured Players: If a player is injured during the game and no substitute is available, the team will receive an out in the batting order position of the injured player.
 - E. Heterosexual Players:
 - 1. "A" and "B" Divisions: A team may have no more than three heterosexual players (including extra hitters) on the field at any given time during a game but may not start the game with nine players where three of them are heterosexual players.
 - 2. "C" and "D" Divisions: A team may have no more than two heterosexual players (including extra hitters) on the field at any given during a game.

8.03 Bats:

- A. All bats that are ASA approved and that do not appear on the latest ASA non-approved list may be used during an SFAAA game. Altered or titanium bats shall be deemed as illegal bats and will be ejected from the game and result in the player using the bat to be called out. Refer to Appendix B for a list of ASA non-approved bats.
- B. All bats must be inspected by the Commissioner/Board Member before the start of each SFAAA season. Each bat that passes the inspection will receive a sticker so all managers, players and Mills Pond umpires may attest to its legality. For a bat to be considered legal it must:
 - 1. clearly display the ASA 2004 Approved Stamp
 - 2. not have any cracks.
 - 3. have the end cap in tack.
 - 4. be free of any dents.
 - 5. will have a wrapped handle that is of non slick tape.
 - 6. be tested for sound to insure that bat is not cracked or worn out. This will also detect if the bat has been altered.
- C. The Commissioner/Board member has the right to deem any bat illegal if any one of the above criteria are found or if the bat is so old to be tested.
- D. Any player who is caught using an illegal bat will be suspended from all SFAAA games for the remainder of the season. If the same player is caught a second time, that player will be suspended for life from any SFAAA sponsored games.

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- E. The manager of the player being suspended will be put on probation for the balance of the season. If the same manager has any other players caught with an illegal bat, he/she will be suspended for the balance of the season.
- F. Any managers or players that are suspended for any bat infractions will have to meet with the SFAAA Board and state why they should be reinstated.

8.04 Metal Cleats: Metal-tipped cleats are not permitted during SFAAA play.

8.05 Pitcher's Count: Batters will start with a one-one count and will be allowed one courtesy foul.

8.06 Pitching Arc: A pitch shall be considered a legal pitch if, from the ground, it equals or exceeds six (6) feet and does not exceed 12 feet in the duration of its flight from the pitcher's hand to home plate.

8.07 Courtesy Runners: Each team shall be allowed up to two courtesy runners in any given game.
A. The courtesy runner must be the player that made the last recorded out.
B. If the courtesy runner is due up to bat while on base, an out will be recorded in that player's spot in the batting order.

8.08 Reentry Rule: Any player may be substituted and reentered once during a game. The substituted player may in turn reenter for the original player. However, upon second reentry, the substituting player must remain in the game unless substituted, in turn, by a different bench player as submitted on the lineup card as a substitute.

A player that is substituted for can only re-enter the game for the player that replaced them and must assume the same batting position in the lineup.

8.09 Homerun Rule: A team may be allowed the following number of homeruns hit over the fence:

1. "A" Division: Four (4) homeruns allowed progressive to a cap of 6 with no progressive allowed in the bottom of the last inning. Any homerun hit after the limit will be considered an out.
2. "B" Division: Two (2) homeruns. Any homerun hit after the limit will be considered an out.
3. "C" Division: One (1) homerun. Any homerun hit after the limit will be considered an out.
4. "D" Division: No homeruns allowed. Any homerun hit will result in an inning-ending out.
5. Any interdivisional games shall utilize the homerun rule of the lower division.

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8.10 Ejections:

- A. Ejections made for umpire abuse, fighting, or unsportsmanlike conduct are, at a minimum, for the remainder of that game and a one-game suspension of the next scheduled game to be played by his or her team. Players during their suspension may not step on the field or be in the dugout of their team.
- B. A second suspension in the same season will result in an automatic two (2) game suspension.
- C. Further action, not enumerated above, may be taken by the SFAAA Ethics Committee for any infraction.

**SECTION 9
League Divisional Standings**

9.01 League Divisional Standings: Current league standing will be posted on the Association's website, www.sfaaa.net. It is the manager's responsibility to check the correctness of the standings and notify the Board on any errors.

9.02 Final Divisional Standings: At the end of the regular season, the final standings of each division shall be determined by win-loss percentages of all teams in that division.

9.03 Tie-Breakers: Ties in the final divisional standings will be settled by the following tie-breaking system:

- A. Head to head won-loss record. If more than 2 teams are tied, the tie-breaker will be the overall won-loss record versus the teams the teams that are tied for that position in the standings. If still tied...
- B. Head to head run differential. If more than 2 teams are tied, the tie-breaker will be the overall run differential versus the teams the teams that are tied for that position in the standings. If still tied...
- C. Total runs against.
- D. Total runs scored.
- E. Won-loss record versus best common opponent.
- F. Run differential versus best common opponent.

**SECTION 10
Playoffs**

10.01 Eligible Players:

- A. In order to participate in the playoffs for a season, a player's name must appear on a lineup card for at least one half of that season's possible games for their subdivision.
- B. A player's name may appear on a lineup card if that player has:
 - 1. taken the field or batted at any point in the game's progress, or;

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2. has been at the game's field for more than two innings of the respective game.
- C. Exceptions to this stipulation may be appealed to the Board.

10.02 Double Elimination: All SFAAA playoffs will use a double elimination format.

10.03 Home Team: Highest seed will be made the home team throughout the playoffs.

10.04 Championship Games: There will be no time limit during the championship game(s).

SECTION 11
Protests

11.01 Game Playing Protests: The current official ASA rule book shall be utilized for all protests regarding the application of rules of play, Game playing protests must be filed according to ASA rules and made through the umpire prior to the last out of the game.

11.02 Eligibility of Players Protests: Should a manager question the eligibility of a player, he or she must fill out a protest incident report and provide it to a member of the Board with protest fee as appropriate. Protests must be made prior to the end of the game.

11.03 The Board shall resolve all disputes and protests arising out of any Association sanctioned softball game within 72 hours after a dispute or protest has been served to the Board.

SECTION 12
Gay Softball World Series (GSWS)

12.01 Gay Softball World Series Bids: Before the beginning of each season, the Board will decide the number of bids to the NAGAAA World Series that will be awarded to each division during the GSWS qualifying season.

- A. If one bid is awarded to a division, the recipient of said bid will be the first place winner of the playoffs during the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series qualifying season.
- B. If two bids are awarded to a division, the recipients of said bids will be the first place team of the regular season and the winner of the playoffs during the Gay Softball World Series qualifying season.

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- 12.02 Notification of Intent:** Teams receiving bids must notify the Board whether they will accept or decline the bid no later than one month prior to the due date for registered teams as established by NAGAAA or one week after the SFAAA playoffs, whichever day is the latter of the two dates.
- A. In the event a team declines the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series bid, the bid, regardless how it has been awarded, shall be designated to the next highest placing team in that division's regular season who may then accept the bid.
- B. In the event that no team within a division accepts the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series bid, the Board may award the bid to another team subject to the rules under NAGAAA.
- 12.03 Gay Softball World Series Champions:** Teams that compete in the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series and place 1st in their division at the GSWS must move up and play in the next highest division for at least one year starting the following season. A team shall be considered the same team if there are 4 or more returning team players or if it has at least 5 returning team players from a ten player roster.
- 12.04 Gay Softball World Series Fines:** Any player or team that is fined at the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series shall be responsible for paying the fine. Failure to do so will result in an automatic suspension for each member of the team until such fines are paid. The Board will notify by certified letter the players and managers affected by any NAGAAA or GSWS fines.

Definitions

active players:

any member of a team who participates on the field of play and is included on the lineup card of any game.

altered bat:

a bat that has been modified in any way from the manufacturer's original specifications or design.

amateur:

a softball player who engages in the sport solely for pleasure and/or the physical, mental or social benefits derived there from. ASA

Association:

the entire paying membership of the South Florida Amateur Athletic Association (SFAAA)

Board:

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the composite of the SFAAA Board of Directors as enumerated in the Bylaws

Board member:

a member, either elected or appointed, to the SFAAA Board of Directors.

courtesy runner:

a non-substituted player who shall be able to take the place of any player who has reached base safely. The courtesy runner(s) shall be designated as the last recorded out. In the case of the first inning, if no outs have been recorded, the eligible courtesy runner shall be the last person or persons in the batting order of the lineup submitted or a substitute for said position.

drafted player:

any person who, at the new player draft, shall be selected by a team

eligible player:

any person who is over 18 and is in good standing with the Association and NAGAAA.

gay:

includes gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender ((GLBT or LGBT) individuals.

Gay Softball World Series (GSWS):

a tournament hosted annually by the North American Amateur Athletic Alliance (NAGAAA).

heterosexual:

(also referred to as straight, non-GLBT, non-LGBT, or non-gay) means not gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

Instruments of Governance (IOG):

the document that includes the SFAAA's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Softball Code and Appendices.

manager:

the person designated by a team to fulfill those roles and complete those responsibilities as enumerated in the Softball Code.

North American Amateur Athletic Alliance (NAGAAA):

the organization responsible for hosting the Gay Softball World Series (GSWS) and from which this Association's rating system is derived.

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non-qualifying season:

a playing season in which the results do not award bid(s) for the right to compete in the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series.

non-player:

any person whose name appears on an active roster but does not appear on a lineup card throughout the course of a season. Non players may include but are not limited to scorekeepers, coaches, managers, or anyone designated by their team as serving an active role on the team.

qualifying season:

a playing season in which the results of the season play award bid(s) for the right to compete in the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series. In a qualifying season, the Association shall schedule at least six (6) games as stipulated in the NAGAAA Instruments of Governance.

replacement players:

any person who has taken the place of a player who has relocated or qualified as an injured player on the team's roster. In doing so, the person replaced shall no longer be considered eligible to appear on team's lineup for any lineup submitted after the replacement procedure has been finalized by the Board.

sponsor:

any person, organization, business or other entity who shall be designated by the team as having provided support to its ability to participate in a softball season.

uniform:

as defined in the SFAAA Ethics Policy, a uniform shall be constituted of a maximum of two (2) shirts, two (2) pants and/or shorts and two (2) hats.

unsportsmanlike conduct:

action that is detrimental or unbecoming to the purposes and objectives of the SFAAAA, its teams or its membership.