

Catholic Girls Softball League

Rules for 5/6 and 7/8 Grades Leagues

REVISION DATE: April 26, 2008

GRACEAC Hotline/Weather Cancellation/Update Phone Line – 456-9563

GRACEAC Web Site – www.graceac.com

1. The Girls Softball League shall consist of Catholic parish school teams that are members of the Grand Rapids Area Catholic Elementary Athletic Council (GRACEAC). No CCD students.
2. Invitational and league playoffs will follow all regular season game rules except where noted.
3. All other GRACEAC Handbook rules and regulations apply. (* denotes references to the GRACEAC Handbook)
4. All other game rules will be according to the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) Rules for Junior Highs for 7/8th grade.
5. Each participating school must have a roster complete with players' names, birth dates, and grades; uniform colors; coaches name, address, and phone numbers; school name and team nickname. This roster must be signed by the school principal and submitted by the Athletic Director to the league president one week prior to the first game.
6. The team playing as the home team for each contest will bring all players to home plate and lead the group in prayer.
7. Opposing teams and coaches will meet immediately following the game at home plate to shake hands in demonstration of good sportsmanship.

Mergers

8. Any school requesting a merger should do so any time after February 15th by referring to the following guidelines:
 - a. Schools shall not practice together prior to approval of their merger request by the league president. Violations shall be reported to the league president.
 - b. A Principal or Athletic Director may request a merger. Coaches must seek approval through their school principal or athletic director for merger request. Coaches may not request a merger.

Practice

9. Practices may begin on the Monday during the week of March 15th. (* Rule P)

10. All teams are limited, per week, to:

Pre-Season: 8 hours - 4 practices Season: 6 hours - 3 practices

Practice time shall be limited to two (2) hours per day. Coaches are encouraged to cut time for practice and number of practices when there is an opportunity. (* Rule G)

Game Eligibility and Minimum Playing Time

11. Sixth grade girls may not participate in the 7th & 8th grade league.

12. To insure total participation, it shall be mandatory that each student athlete participate the minimum time per game of two full innings in the field with free substitutions and rocket rule batting.

13. When a player becomes injured during the course of a game and is deemed unable to continue, the minimum playing time for that player is not required.

14. Anytime a player is injured and returns to play, the playing time minimum must be met.

15. It is the responsibility of the coach to make sure that each student athlete meets the required minimum playing time. If the minimum is not met, the game will be considered a forfeit.

Game Rules

16. Each game shall consist of seven innings with a time limit of 80 minutes for the 7/8th grade. 5th and 6th grade games will consist of six innings with a time limit of 75 minutes. No inning shall begin after the time limit has been reached.

17. Ties will not be played out in the regular season. The time limit will determine when game concludes.

18. At least five minutes before the scheduled starting time, each team shall supply the home team the first name, last name, and number of each squad member who may participate. The list shall be in the correct batting order. If a player is not present when it is their turn to bat, they will be called out. If a player is absent at the start of the game, please leave them out of the batting order. When they arrive, they will be added to bottom of the batting order.

19. There will be a coaches meeting prior to each game at home plate with both head coaches and the umpires.

20. The coaches meeting will stress sportsmanship and leadership as well as a rule review. ie-no jewelry, ground rules, batting lineups and baseballs. The home team supplies a new softball and each team supplies one "good" ball to be used. If a game begins with an optic yellow or white ball, the same ball will be used throughout the entire game.

21. The home teams score book is to be the official book of the game. Coaches from both teams shall meet after each ½ innings to determine accuracy of score book.

22. No jewelry may be worn during a game. Any unforgiving material (i.e.; plastic or metal) may not be worn during game. A mound visit can be charged to a team that does not conform to this rule.

23. Uniforms of all team members should be of the same color and style. Coaches will be responsible for the uniform compliance of all their players.

24. Only players and coaches may be on the field during the pre-game warm-ups, time-outs. All fans and spectators must be kept off the field.

25. Courtesy runners will be allowed for pitchers and catchers. The person who made the last out will be the designated runner. This rule is encouraged to move the game along. However it remains a coaching decision.

26. One and One count will be in effect for 5/6 and 7/8th grades till 5-1-08. The count will begin at 0-0.

27. In 7/8th grade pitchers will be allowed to pitch 4 innings per game. One pitch will be considered an inning. In 5/6th grade a 3 inning limit is in effect. Each player is limited to playing 3 innings in an one position for a game, including pitchers.

28. Coaches will be allowed four mound visits per game.

29. The infield fly rule will be followed for the 7/8th grade level only.

30. Games may begin with eight players.

31. The over throw rule that will be followed is as follows: At the time of the release of the throw, the runner is awarded the base that they were running to plus one. This applies to infield and outfield throws. If the ball remains in the field of play, the runner(s) advance at their own peril.

32. A mercy will be called if a team is ahead by 15 or more runs after 5 innings.

33. A five run limit per inning will be in effect at the 5/6th grade level.

34. Stealing will be allowed at the 7/8th grade level. Runner must remain in contact with the base until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. If the ball is overthrown during an attempted steal, all base runners must remain at that base they acquired by the steal. In 5/6th grade the runner may steal 2nd base only. No advance by stealing past 2nd base.

35. No metal spikes are to be worn.

36. If a batter is hit by a pitch, the batter will be awarded a base only if the umpire determines that the batter made an attempt to avoid being hit. This is an umpire's judgment and cannot be appealed.

37. Warm up catchers must wear protective helmet and masks.

38. Players must wear protective helmets while acting as runners, batters or while on the field as a coach.

39. Runners must slide on tag plays at all bases, with exception runner going to first base. Runners not sliding to avoid contact on a close play will be declared out. Each team will be given one warning per game till May 1st. Thereafter no warning will be needed to call runner out.

40. Fake Tag-Fielder who attempts a fake tag on a runner by pounding their glove, acting and faking they are catching the ball to make a tag will be automatically ejected from the game. Each team will be given one warning each game before ejection.

41. Ejected players will be removed from the line up, including the rocket batting rule line up. Their place in the batting order will not be an out. Instead that player will be skipped over. Ejected player, except for unsportsmanship behavior, may play the next game. Coaches and student/athletes removed from a game for unsportsmanship behavior shall miss the next game.

42. Each team will receive one warning for a thrown bat. The next occurrence for that team will result in the player being called out.

43. An 11 inch size softball will be used at the 5/6th grade level and a 12 inch size softball at the 7/8th level. White with red stitched or optic yellow with red stitched may be used. COR of .47 is mandatory. If the game begins using a white ball, it will end with a white ball. Same for yellow ball.

44. Modified or fast pitch style will be allowed at either level.

45. At the 5/6th grade level, players will change position every three innings (including pitchers).

46. Bunting is allowed in 5/6th and 7/8th Grade levels

47. Pitchers will be given five pitches within a one minute time limit for each inning.

48. Pitching Distance will be 40 feet for 5/6 and 7/8th grade levels

49. Base path distances will be 60 feet for both levels.

50. Dropped Third Strike Rule: The batter becomes a runner when the third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied or (2) first base is occupied with two out. Note: A batter forfeits her opportunity to advance to first base when she enters the dugout or other dead ball areas.

Coaching Guidelines

50. The head coach is responsible for the conduct and behavior of substitutes, disqualified squad members, spectators, and all other bench personnel.

51. Bench personnel shall not:

- a. Disrespectfully address an official.
- b. Incite undesirable crowd reactions.

Player Safety and Injuries

52. An unconscious or apparently unconscious player, as determined by the game officials, will be removed from the game by the official. The player may not return to any game or practice, without written authorization from a physician (M.D. or D.O.). This authorization must be given to:

- A. the game official prior to the player's return, if for the same game.
- b. her coach before practicing again.

53. A player who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has an excessive amount of blood on her uniform must leave the game. The game official will stop the game and allow the coach one full minute to bring in a substitution. The affected player must sit out until the next time stoppage before returning to the game. Excessive bleeding or an excessive amount of blood is any amount on the uniform or skin that can be transferred to a player, opponent, or official. The player may not return until the bleeding has stopped, and if necessary, the affected area covered. If the player has an excessive amount of blood on her uniform, the uniform must be changed. Coaches are encouraged to have extra shorts, jerseys, socks, etc. for the player to change into. Inexpensive numbered t-shirts can be used as long as they are of a similar color as the game jersey.

Inclement Weather

54. Coaches shall call the GRACEAC Hotline to be notified of cancelled games due to inclement weather. If school is cancelled, Games may still be played. Coaches, parents, student/athlete or athletic directors should call the GRACEAC hotline (456-9563) for further information regarding game status. If a game is cancelled due to inclement weather, the contest shall be played at a time and court mutually agreed on by the league president and coaches.

55. If lighting or thunder is seen or heard prior or during the game, the game shall stop immediately. This rule is not up to discussion, lighting is lighting. All coaches, players and officials are to seek immediate cover in a building. If no building is available, then the game cancelled and coaches, players and officials shall leave the area. If shelter is available play may not resume until a full 15 minutes has passed from the last seen or heard lighting or thunder. If the severe weather persists for 30 minutes or longer, the game is cancelled. If the game has been played for is innings or more for 5/6th grade and 4 innings or more for 7/8th grade it will be determined to be a complete game. Otherwise all attempts will be made to reschedule the game and it will be played at the same point it was cancelled. Both coaches shall agree to the status of the scorebook.