

Constitution And Bylaws





CONSTITUTIONAL ARTICLES

CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

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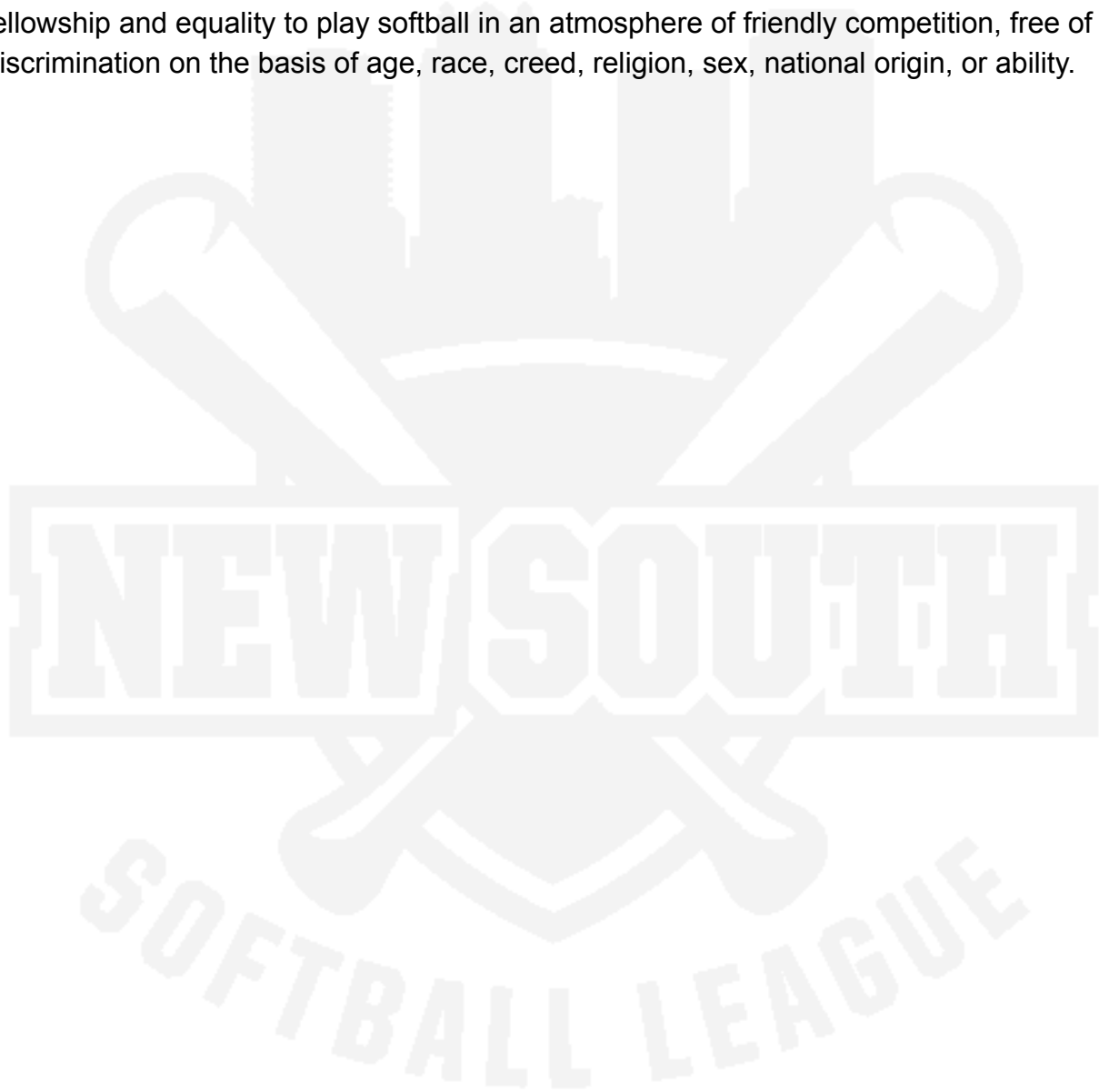
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Article 1:

Mission Statement

To provide and protect the opportunity for individuals who support the bonds of LGBTQ+ fellowship and equality to play softball in an atmosphere of friendly competition, free of discrimination on the basis of age, race, creed, religion, sex, national origin, or ability.

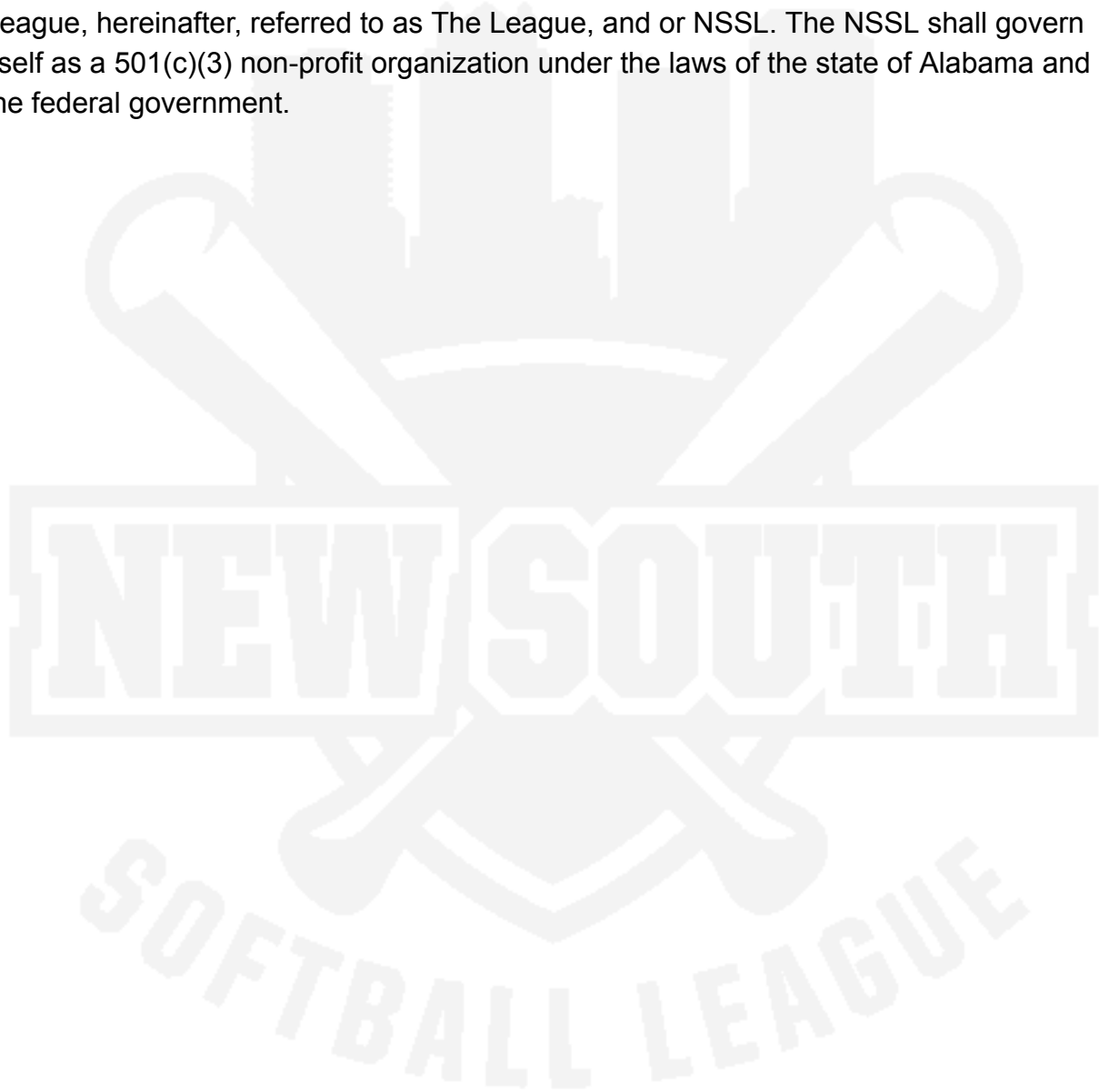


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Article 2:

Organization

The name of our organization shall be deemed and known as the New South Softball League, hereinafter, referred to as The League, and or NSSL. The NSSL shall govern itself as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization under the laws of the state of Alabama and the federal government.



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Article 3:

COMMITMENT STATEMENT

The NSSL is committed to building an LGBTQ+ family through sportsmanship and community engagement within the Birmingham metro and Central Alabama areas.



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Article 4:

Objectives

To continue and maintain active membership in the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance (NAGAAA)/International Pride Softball (IPS).

To Promote and encourage participation within the LGBTQ+ and allies community in league sanctioned play including an annual invitational tournament locally, and or traveling to other sanctioned tournaments throughout the United States.

To always uphold the utmost respect and show equality for our league, its players, allies, and supporters.



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Article 5:

Duration

The period and duration of the NSSL season is indefinite or can be defined as Spring and Fall seasons.



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Article 6:

Organizational Structure

Executive Board

The Executive Board will be comprised of the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations Director and Statistician/Bylaws Director. No person on the Executive Board will be allowed to act as a voting team representative in addition to their voting privileges as a Board Member. The Executive Board shall serve in accordance with the terms and responsibilities as set forth in the NSSL ByLaws.

Committee members will be comprised of

- Ratings who will report to the Secretary
- Hall of Fame who will report to the Assistant Commissioner
- Tournament Director who will report to Commissioner and Treasurer
- Fundraising who will report to the PR Director and Statistician/Bylaws Director
- Events who will report to PR Director and Statistician/Bylaws Director

General Council

The General Council shall consist of the entire Executive Board and one (1) representative from each active member team. Participating teams are defined in the NSSL Bylaws. The General Council shall serve in accordance with the terms and responsibilities as set forth in the NSSL Bylaws.

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Article 7:

Procedures

Notification

Amendments to the Constitution/Bylaws may be proposed by any member of the League at large. Such proposed amendments must be presented in writing to the Executive Board via email to nsslexecboard@gmail.com and or at any of the League General Council meetings.

Presentation

Any proposed changes presented to the Executive Board may be approved or rejected by a majority vote from the Executive Board and General Council. If any proposed change is approved, they will be set forth in the next General Council meeting.

Ratification of Amendments

Ratification of an amendment or Bylaw to the Constitution will require a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote by the General Council.

Ratification of Constitution

This Constitution/bylaw shall be accepted and or approved when a two thirds (2/3) vote of the current General Council of the NSSL vote to affirm the acceptance of these articles. Once the Constitution/bylaws are ratified (or agreed upon), they will indefinitely stay in effect until the Executive Board and or General Council votes to change.

NSSL BYLAWS

SECTION 1: MEMBERSHIP

1.1 Team or Individual Membership:

Any "Membership" shall be yearly and open to all individuals eighteen (18) years of age or older and shall commence upon payment of yearly dues and signing a registration form/waiver of Liability.

1.2 Team Membership

1.2.1 A team is considered to have a membership when their yearly membership fee has been paid. Said team will receive a voting right at that time, but still may not be considered Active until rosters and waivers have been submitted. (see Section 1.2.3)

1.2.2 Any and all teams are required to have at least 10 active players on their roster up to a Maximum of 20 players.

1.2.3. A Team will be considered Active when yearly team fees have been paid, roster has been submitted, waivers have been submitted by all players.

1.2.4 Teams participating in NSSL League regular season play and ISP Gay Softball World Series play must abide by the appropriate ratio of gay to non gay players. Gay-includes LGBTQ+ individuals.

A) At no time during regular season league play will a team have less than 50% + 1 LGBTQ+ participation in the official lineup

B) A player must sign a form at the beginning of the season indicating whether the player is part of the LGBTQ+ Community.

1.3 Active/Non-Player Members

Active Player – any player actively engaged as a player on the roster of a member team that has paid Membership fees.

Non-Player – any person not considered an active player is a non-field player (i.e., manager, coach, or team representative). Non-players are not required to pay a Membership fee yearly but are considered part of the League. They must however sign a waiver of Liability to enter any field locations set forth by the NSSL.

1.4 Waiver

Each active player and non-player must sign a yearly registration form to enter the league, with the understanding that their signature waives any claims against the NSSL, its officers, or its sponsors resulting from their part as a league member. This must be completed before participating in League play.

1.5 League Sponsor

Any individual(s), business(es), or organization(s) that gives a monetary donation and or

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good/services to the NSSL for the betterment of the League and or its members.

1.5.1 - New South Softball League is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization with a dedicated mission. As a result, contributions to the league, teams and tournament are considered tax write offs of those individuals or organizations donating.

1.5.2 - Teams that acquire donations or sponsorships are required to

- Have the check written to NSSL, the league takes a 10% fee up to no more than \$50, the lesser of the two.
- In addition, team/player fee is not considered a monetary donation

1.6 Team Expulsion

The Executive Board reserves the right to suggest canceling a team's membership at any time for violating any of the bylaws set forth in this document. If such a determination is made, a 2/3 majority vote is required, and the expulsion is handed down, the violating team shall not be entitled to any refunds of any league fees, including but not limited to Membership Fees, Player Fees and Southern Shootout Entry Fees.

1.6.1 - All members of the team cannot join another team without approval from $\frac{2}{3}$ majority of the General Council.

1.7 Membership Fees

Membership fees are paid at the start of the new league year and are solely intended to allow the paying team to attend league meetings and to secure one (1) vote on any General Council voting matters and elections during that year. Once the league year has started, no refunds for Membership Fees shall be refunded unless it can be documented that the team did not attend any league function after payment of the fee. Functions are defined as season games, board meetings, and or league events.

1.8 Player Fee Refunds

Any player fees paid will be subject to refund in the event that some or all of the league's regular season games are canceled. If any games are played, the amount of the refund will be prorated based on the percentage of games the team has played. If a player desires a refund under any other scenario, the player must submit a written (email is acceptable) request to the Executive Board. The request will be voted on at the earliest possible convenience, and any refunds approved shall be paid within 14 days of the voting decision.

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SECTION 2: TEAM ROSTERS

2.1 Team rosters may list no more than twenty (20) active players and two (2) non-players.

2.2 Opening day rosters must include the following information: full preferred name, month, day of birth, and player ratings in accordance with the most current IPS ratings guidelines.

2.3 Opening day, which will be announced by the Executive Board, all team rosters must be submitted to the league secretary seven (7) days before playing the first regular season game.

2.3.1 This roster must be submitted, with appropriate player fees, to the League designee, at least seven (7) days prior to opening day of the season. The designated time deadline will be announced by the Executive Board at least 30 days prior to the start of the season.

2.3.2 The submitted completed roster must include denomination of coach and manager, full preferred player names, given NAGAAA rating, birthday and must be accompanied by player fees. Any rosters submitted without this information will be considered an incomplete roster and will result in a forfeit of the first week of games.

2.3.3 In the event of inclement weather, and or extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the League and or Executive Board, the Board may extend and/or change the deadline without a General Council quorum vote. The Executive Board will announce the changes as soon as possible should these circumstances occur.

2.4 The NSSL Secretary will provide copies in person and by email of all team rosters to all coaches and/or managers at the beginning of the first regular season game. The secretary will also provide postseason rosters to all coaches and/or managers by the same means. This will be done after the entries have been made into the IPS system.

2.5 If a new player is added to the team roster, the player must:

- A)** pay the player fee
- B)** sign the league waiver

2.6 If a new player is added to the team roster, the coach and/or manager must:

- A)** submit an updated roster to the League secretary before player steps on field
- B)** submit the player fee and league waiver form to the League secretary and/or any member of the Executive Board.
- C)** Coach of opposing team must be notified prior to game play of revised roster

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2.7 A postseason roster must be submitted to the League Secretary or designee no later than 7 days after the regular spring season ends. Rosters should include full legal name, month, day and year of birth, signature of player and player rating. This action will provide the Executive Board ample time to submit into the NAGAAA/IPS system.

2.8 The post-season roster will include designation of eligible players for NSSL post-season and NAGAAA/IPS for the Gay Softball World Series (GSWS) play.

2.8.1 World Series Roster changes after the deadline that incurs a fee, the team will be responsible for the fine. Any and all fines will be paid by the team before the upcoming season starts. Failure to pay the fines, the team will not be eligible to play until the fine is paid.

2.8.2 Fees & Fines - New South Softball will cover the fines incurred during World Series play. Teams are required to reimburse the league in order to be eligible to play in the next season.



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SECTION 3: ADMINISTRATION

3.1 The Executive Board

3.1.1 The day-to-day operations of the League shall be carried out by the Executive Board.

3.1.2 The Executive Board shall consist of the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations Director and Statistician/Bylaws Director.

3.2 Duties of the Executive Board

Shall have the responsibility to oversee all NSSL business and implement all aspects of NSSL policies and procedures. The Executive Board may entertain changes and/or additions to the NSSL Bylaws and recommend to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee any changes for approval. The Executive Board shall assure League continuity through compliance with NAGAAA governing manual (where appropriate) and USA Rules and Regulations.

3.3 Election of the Executive Board

A. The Executive Board will be elected to two (2) year terms with a transition period to occur no later than November 1. Elected officers will officially assume the position to which they were elected on January 1st, unless the incumbent officer wishes to vacate their position at any time after the election of the new officer. In this situation, the incoming officer will assume the position as of the day the incumbent vacates the position. The terms will be staggered with elections to the office of Commissioner, Secretary, and Public Relations Director, held in even numbered years and elections to the offices of Assistant Commissioner, Treasurer, and Statistician/Bylaws Director in odd numbered years in which the second year of a term ends.

1. No more than three members of any one team shall be eligible to serve on the Executive Board at the same time. In order for three members of one team to hold elected positions, one of these positions must be League Commissioner, so as to limit the number of officer votes to two except in cases of a tie.

B. The General Council shall convene a general business meeting no later than the first Monday following Labor Day. At this meeting, the General Council shall open for nominations for the position(s) up for election. Nominations will be open until the General Council votes on the position no later than November 1.

C. In the event that an Executive Board position becomes vacant, immediate

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notification will be sent out via email or in person meeting, accepting nominations. The position will be filled at the next scheduled league meeting. In the event that the commissioner's position becomes vacant, the Assistant Commissioner will assume the position of Commissioner until an election is held.

D. The General Council shall have the power to remove any member of the Executive Board of the NSSL by a 2/3 affirmative vote for reasons of conduct not in the best interest of the league, and for failure, refusals, or inability to perform the official duties of the office.

3.4 Duties of the Commissioner:

A. Attend and govern all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers.

B. Oversee and execute the overall general operation of the League.

C. Direct policies and enforce all the rules of the League and perform quarterly reviews of the Executive Board.

D. Initiate appropriate audits of league and tournament records quarterly.

E. Delegate additional responsibilities to league officers, coaches and members

F. Retains one vote concerning General Elections and "motions on the floor" deadlocked in a tie.

G. Communicate regularly with the NSSL Executive Board, General Council, Coaches and Managers.

H. Act as a liaison between NAGAAA/IPS, the NSSL, Birmingham Amateur Softball Association, USA, Park Officials or Field Operators.

I. Authority to appoint certain positions as authorized:

1. Govern Interim Executive Board positions until elections are held as authorized herein.

2. Govern Committee Chairs unless otherwise provided by another section of the Bylaws

J. Performs other duties as delegated by the Board.

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- K. Send postseason rosters to NAGAAA/IPS by selected cut off time.
- L. Schedule Coach's Clinic before start of regular season
- M. Hold and govern Executive Board Meetings Monthly in addition to General Council Meetings.
- N. Assign schedule for Executive Board members administrative attendance during regular season.
- O. To attend the bi-annual NAGAA/IPS meetings as scheduled.
- P. Oversees Southern Shootout Tournament Committee

3.5 Duties of the Assistant Commissioner:

- A. Attend all Executive Board and General Council meetings, and all League Functions/Fundraisers.
- B. Conduct meetings in the absence of the Commissioner.
- C. Oversee Grievance Process and Protest Process. Organize any Grievance and/or Protest Committee.
- D. Cooperate with Field Operators in securing all umpires for league play.
- E. Investigate protest filed during League play with umpires.
- F. Report to Executive Board and General Council results of investigations of any protest/grievances filed.
- G. Oversees Hall of Fame Committee
- H. Retain one vote concerning motions "on the floor."
- I. Provide a complete schedule of all NSSL games to League coaches and/or team managers a week prior to the start of season.
- J. In the event a game is postponed (i.e. rain delay), the game will be

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rescheduled by the Assistant Commissioner.

K. Perform other duties as assigned by The Commissioner.

L. Attend Coach's Clinic before start of regular season.

3.6 Duties of Secretary

A. Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers.

B. Preserve and maintain records taken at NSSL meetings.

C. Provide copies of the minutes to the Executive Board, General Council Members and additional teams members within 10 business days of last scheduled meeting.

D. Maintain correspondence with all active Team Representatives.

E. Monitor NSSL rosters.

F. Confirm deadlines and information to all coaches and/or team managers.

G. Provide copies of all NSSL rosters to League coaches and/or team managers Prior to the start of regular season play.

H. Retain one vote concerning motions "on the floor."

I. Maintain updated League email directory.

J. Responsible for getting signed team roster and rating guideline sheet from each team's coach, manager, or representative at the beginning and end of the regular season.

K. Perform other duties as assigned by the Commissioner.

L. Attend Coach's Clinic before start of regular season.

M. Oversees Ratings Committee

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3.7 Duties of Treasurer

- A.** Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers
- B.** Preserve and maintain all ongoing financial records of League business
- C.** Pay all League debts from the League account and maintain receipts.
- D.** Provide an up-to-date detailed treasurer's report at each NSSL meeting.
- E.** Retain one vote concerning motions "on the floor."
- F.** Responsible for collecting all monies from fundraisers (within 7 days) or unless delegated to another Board Member – on a case by case basis.
- G.** Develop budget for League by January General Council Meeting.
- H.** Perform other duties as assigned by the Commissioner.
- I.** Funding of NSSL teams to tournaments other than NAGAAA GSWS is not the responsibility of the NSSL.
- J.** Pay any monies due to NAGAAA incurred by the league, i.e. NAGAAA dues, fines etc., within deadlines provided by NAGAAA.
- K.** An expense report, including receipts, must be completed before reimbursement can be provided to any individual conducting official NSSL business. Note: this policy does not cover per diem advances to league officers representing the NSSL at official NAGAAA functions.
- L.** Oversee Southern Shootout Tournament Committee alongside Commissioner

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M. In order to conduct business on behalf of the league, each NSSL officer shall be allocated an annual budget. Officers may spend, on official league business, up to this amount without prior approval by the Executive Board and/or General Council. Receipts for all expenses from the officer's budget must be submitted to the Treasurer no later than the next regularly scheduled General Council meeting following the date the expense was incurred. Any expenses which would exceed the annual budget must be submitted to the General Council for approval, the annual budget for officers is as follows:

- Commissioner: \$300
- Assistant Commissioner: \$250
- Treasurer: \$250
- Public Relations Director: \$250
- Secretary: \$100
- Bylaws and Statistician Director: \$100
- Tournament Director \$100

Note: these funds shall be included in the annual monies designated to be returned to the league account prior to any team disbursements.

N. Attend Coach's Clinic before start of regular season.

O. Oversee Shoutout finances.

3.8 Duties of Public Relations Director

A. Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers.

B. Create media informing the community of the NSSL.

C. Maintain NSSL website and all social media pages and perform assigned duties by Commissioner.

D. Assist with league logos, posters, flyers, and marketing materials concerning League activities.

E. Work with Assistant Commissioner for media promotions for fundraisers.

F. Any other duties that the Executive Board agree upon.

G. Organize recruiting events.

H. Retain one vote concerning motions "on the floor."

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- I. Attend Coach's Clinic before start of regular season.
- J. Authority to delegate responsibilities to coaches and members in relation to fundraising (marketing and public relations).
- K. Oversees social and events and fundraising chairs and their subcommittees.
- L. Provide written documentation to the League concerning all fundraising activities.

3.9 Duties of Statistician & Bylaws Director

- A. Attend all Executive Board and General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers.
- B. Collect all weekly scorecards from each team.
- C. Maintain all league statistics, including but not limited to: Won-Loss records and games played.
- D. Publish weekly updates to the NSSL website reflecting the results of the previous week's games and updated standings for each division.
- E. Publish updates to the league website upon completion of the Southern Shootout to reflect trophies awarded for each division.
- F. Publish list of players ineligible for World Series participation at 25%, 50%, 75% and 100% of schedule games completion.
- G. Responsible for maintaining online NSSL Instruments of Governance documents, including dates of most recent updates.
- H. Responsible for ensuring versions of outdated documents are preserved.
- I. Responsible for coordinating reviews of bylaws on annual basis and providing recommendations for amendments to the league Executive Board and/or General Council.
- J. Any other duties as assigned by the league Executive Board.

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- K.** Retain one vote concerning motions “on the floor.”
- L.** Attend Coach’s Clinic before start of regular season.
- M.** Oversees social and events and fundraising chairs and their subcommittees.
- N.** Provide written documentation to the League concerning all fundraising activities.

3.10 Duties of Tournament Director

- A.** Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers.
- B.** Direct all Southern Shootout Softball Tournament activities.
- C.** Monitor all advertisements related to Southern Shootout.
- D.** Preserve and maintain all records of tournament matter.
- E.** After Tournament play, submit all records to the NSSL Secretary.
- F.** Secure a Southern Shootout Tournament Committee.
- G.** Prepare and present Proposed Budget by December’s General Council Meeting.
- H.** Present Tournament Rules by February General Council Meeting.
- I.** The Tournament Director position will run in 2-year terms, being elected on odd years. However, the election will be held 45 days after the tournament was held.
- J.** Attend Coach’s Clinic before start of regular season.
- K.** Has authority to appoint and supervise an assistant tournament director.
- L.** Will not hold an executive board member vote on all “motions on the floor.”

3.11 Fundraising Chair

- A.** Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all league

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functions/fundraisers

- B.** Maintain primary responsibility for planning, scheduling, recruiting, and execution of league fundraisers.
- C.** Maintain meaningful working relationships with league sponsors.
- D.** Work with Treasurer to maintain historical record of donors to ensure compliance.
- E.** Perform other duties related to fundraising as assigned by the Public Relations Director.
- F.** Will not hold an executive board member vote on all “motions on the floor.”
- G.** This position will be appointed by the Public Relations Director.

3.12 Events Chair

- A.** Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all league functions/fundraisers.
- B.** Maintain primary responsibility for planning, scheduling, recruiting, and execution of league social events.
- C.** Maintain meaningful working relationships with league sponsors.
- D.** Perform other duties as assigned by Public Relations Director.
- E.** Will not hold an executive board member vote on all “motions on the floor.”
- F.** This position will be appointed by the Public Relations Director.

3.13 Ratings Chair

- A.** Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all league functions/fundraisers.
- B.** Lead and organize Coach’s Clinic before start of regular season.
- C.** In the event of a team receiving 2 or more protests, Ratings Chair will

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organize and lead the required ratings clinic.

D. Will not hold an executive board member vote on all “motions on the floor.”

F. NSSL executive board will appoint the first ratings chair. The Ratings Chair will help assemble the Ratings Committee and sit over it until first election period.

G. Following the appointment of the first ratings chair – the position of Ratings Chair will be elected to a two (2) year term with a transition period to occur no later than November 1st. Elected officers will officially assume the position to which they were elected on January 1st, unless the incumbent officer wishes to vacate their position at any time after the election of the new officer. In this situation, the incoming officer will assume the position as of the day the incumbent vacates the position. The election of the new Ratings Chair will fall on odd number years in alignment with the elections of Assistant Commissioner, Treasurer, and Statistician/Bylaws Director.

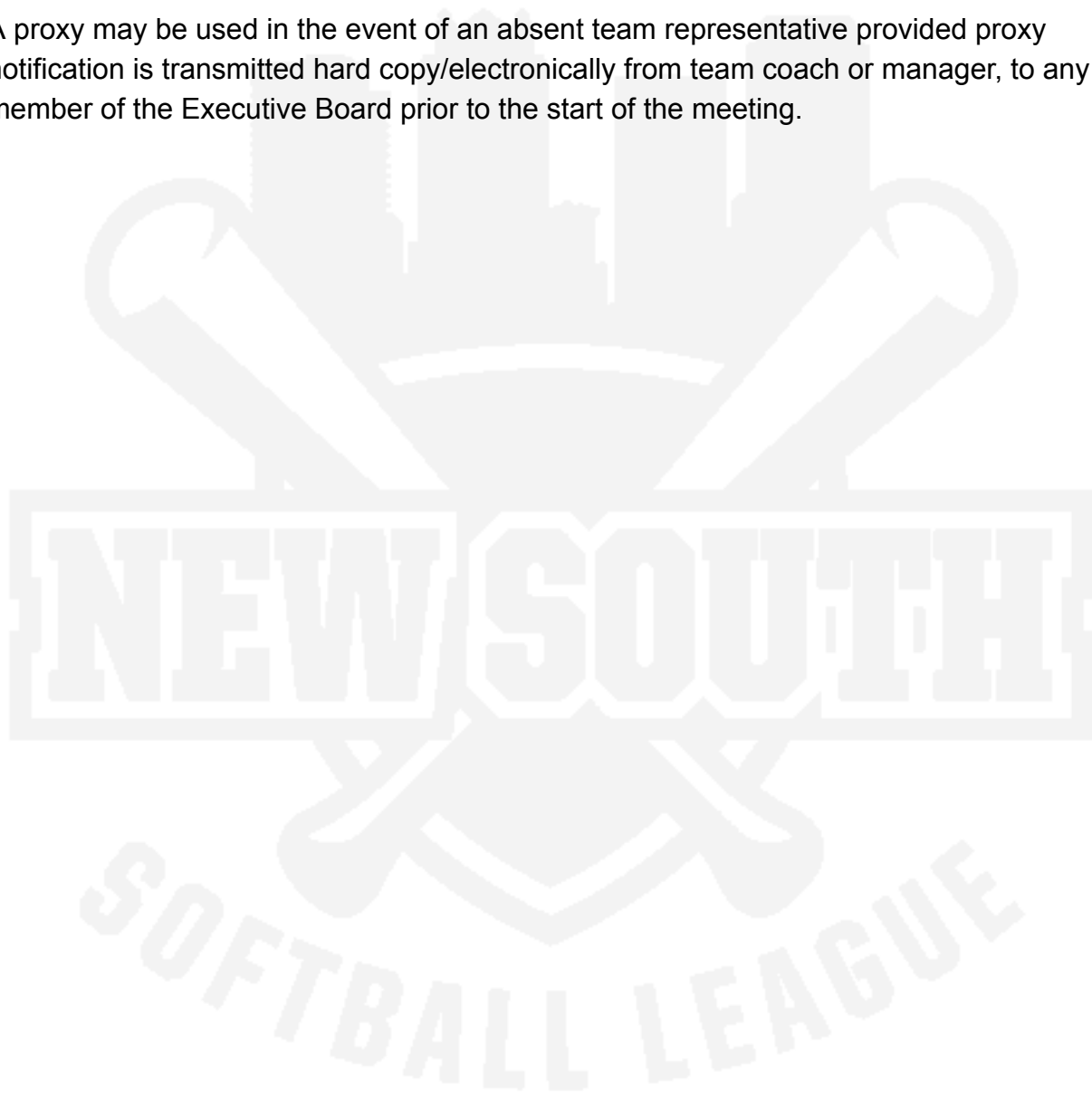


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SECTION 4: THE GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Council shall consist of the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations Director, Statistician/Bylaws Director, Southern Shootout Tournament Director and one (1) representative from each team as well as committee chairs.

A proxy may be used in the event of an absent team representative provided proxy notification is transmitted hard copy/electronically from team coach or manager, to any member of the Executive Board prior to the start of the meeting.



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SECTION 5: MEETINGS

5.1 Monthly Meeting

Meetings will be held monthly with time and dates agreed upon by The General Council and announced by the Commissioner.

5.2 Meeting Location

The location of the NSSL Monthly Meeting, as well as additional meetings, shall be determined by the Executive Board and communicated to the General Council as soon as possible.

5.3 Notice of Meeting

Shall be distributed directly to each team coach/manager representative in advance of the regularly scheduled meeting.

5.4 Additional Meetings

Special meetings of the Executive Board or General Council may be called and convened by the Commissioner and/or officers of the Executive Board at any time:

5.4.1 Upon petition in writing by one-third of all Coaches/Team Managers, the Executive Board may call a meeting of the General Council.

5.5 Official Meeting Requirements

Any Board of Director, General Council, or Coaches/Manager's meeting shall require a quorum to establish sufficient authority for any issue to be decided by voting at meetings.

5.6 Quorums

Executive Board and General Council meetings must establish a quorum of at least 50 percent attendance of Executive Board and 50 percent of team delegates.

5.7 Robert's Rules of Order

This instrument will be used as a guideline to govern the conduct of all Board of Director and General Council meetings.

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SECTION 6: ELIGIBILITY

6.1 Regular Season Player Eligibility

Definition: Regular Season play will include all NSSL regular scheduled season games. This does not include tournaments or the International Pride World Series.

6.1.1 The league is open to all players 18 years of age and above, regardless of race or sex.

A. If a player plays in 2 or more NAGAAA/IPS city leagues, the player must declare their home league prior to start of the NSSL season.

6.1.2 All players must pay a player fee, complete a liability waiver form seven (7) days in advance of participating in the upcoming season. After the season has officially started, the 7-day time frame does not apply. Players can be added before game time.

A. If a player has not paid the player fee, then the player will be ineligible to play.

B. If a player uses a check as payment for the player fee and the check is returned by the bank for any reason, the player will be ineligible until the player fee and return check fee as charged by the bank (with certified funds or cash) is paid.

C. All players must sign a waiver of liability to the NSSL and/or hosting Park and Recreational organization that releases these organizations from responsibility from potential injury. Failure to sign this form will result in the player being ineligible and forfeiture of games by the player's team.

D. A player must sign the official team roster by the deadline date(s) as set forth by the NSSL Executive Board. Additions to the roster may be submitted together with player fee(s), waiver form at any time for NEW members of the league.

6.1.3 Players may change teams once during the NSSL regular season upon receiving signed written or electronic consent of the coach of the player's team and the team the player wishes to join. If the coach of the player's team refuses to sign the written consent form, the player may petition the Executive Board for permission to change teams.

A. Player requests to change teams more than once during the course of a season must be approved by the Executive Board

B. Approval of petitions to change teams going before the Executive Board will require a simple majority of 50%

C. The player in question must be added to the new team's roster prior to being

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allowed to participate in a game for the new team, so as to allow the recalculation of the team's overall rating

D. In order to facilitate the recalculation of the new team's overall rating, under no circumstances will a player be allowed to change teams immediately preceding the start of a regularly scheduled game, during the course of an in-progress game or between games on a date in which the team is scheduled to play multiple games.

6.2 Postseason Player Eligibility

Definition: Postseason Play includes the IPS World Series.

6.2.1 Any player ineligible for Regular Season play is also ineligible for Postseason play.

6.2.2 All players must meet NAGAAA/IPS Eligibility requirements for postseason play (Governing Manual Section 7 NAGAAA/IPS Softball Code). To be eligible for postseason play, a player must have played as an eligible player in at least 50% of regular season games. Wins, losses, and forfeits count as games but rainouts or other postponements do not count. If a player is forced to move up a division, then the games played in both divisions count as part of the 50% rule.

A. Participation is defined as a player included on their team's game lineup card and present in (or within close vicinity) of their team's bench or dugout and dressed out to play.

6.2.3 Teams participating in the IPS World Series will abide by Section Governing Manual 7.05 IPS Softball Code of the NAGAAA/IPS Guidelines. (Section Governing Manual 7.05 NAGAAA/IPS Softball Code reads – Non-LGBT players – A maximum of three (3) Non-LGBT players are permitted on a GSWS roster.)

6.2.4 Any team playing in the GSWS must play in the same division that you were in within the League. Any player otherwise meeting all the other eligibility criteria may participate in the GSWS in any division supported by the players rating.

6.3 Loss of Player Eligibility from the NSSL

6.3.1 A player will lose eligibility if the player fails to pay the player fee, or if payment is returned for any reason.

6.3.2 A player ejected from a game for fighting, baiting, or flagrant acts during regular season league play, will result in the suspension of the ejected player(s). Duration of the suspension will be determined by the Executive Board. Players fee

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will not be refunded.

6.3.3. If a player is ejected for a non-flagrant, non-fighting infraction, the player will be suspended for one game. If the player is ejected for two non-flagrant, non-fighting infractions, the player becomes ineligible to play for the remainder of the NSSL regular season and any post-season play. Player fees will not be refunded.

6.3.4 Any player found not acting in the best interest of the NSSL while participating in any NSSL function, tournaments, including but not limited to NAGAAA cities, the GSWS, and NAGAAA cup, could result in suspension. Duration of the suspension will be determined by the Executive Board.

6.3.5 Any player found violating social media guidelines laid out in Appendix 5 of the NSSL Bylaws at any time while active as an NSSL member could result in suspension. Duration of the suspension will be determined by the Executive Board.

6.3.6 Ejected player(s) and/or suspended players have the right of an appeal hearing, which must be requested, in writing/electronic, within 24 hours of the ejection with the NSSL Executive Board.

6.3.7 Appeal procedures of suspensions – any due process hearing properly requested by ejected player(s) must be submitted to the executive board email within 24 hours after the ejection occurred. If suspension has been appealed by the ejected player, the Executive Board will be required to call a special meeting before the ejected player(s) next game to decide if charges still stand. A two-thirds vote by the Executive Board will determine the outcome of the appeal.

6.4 Team Eligibility

6.4.1 A team is eligible to play in the NSSL regular season if the following general requirements are met:

A. All players have paid their player's fees, signed a waiver form, and are eligible

B. The team has at least nine (9) active players to take the field. If a team chooses to play with 9 players, the 10th player is an automatic out.

C. All Teams fees are paid two weeks prior to the start of regular season league play.

D. If a team uses a check as payment for the player fee or teams fees and the check is returned by the bank for any reason, the player will be ineligible until

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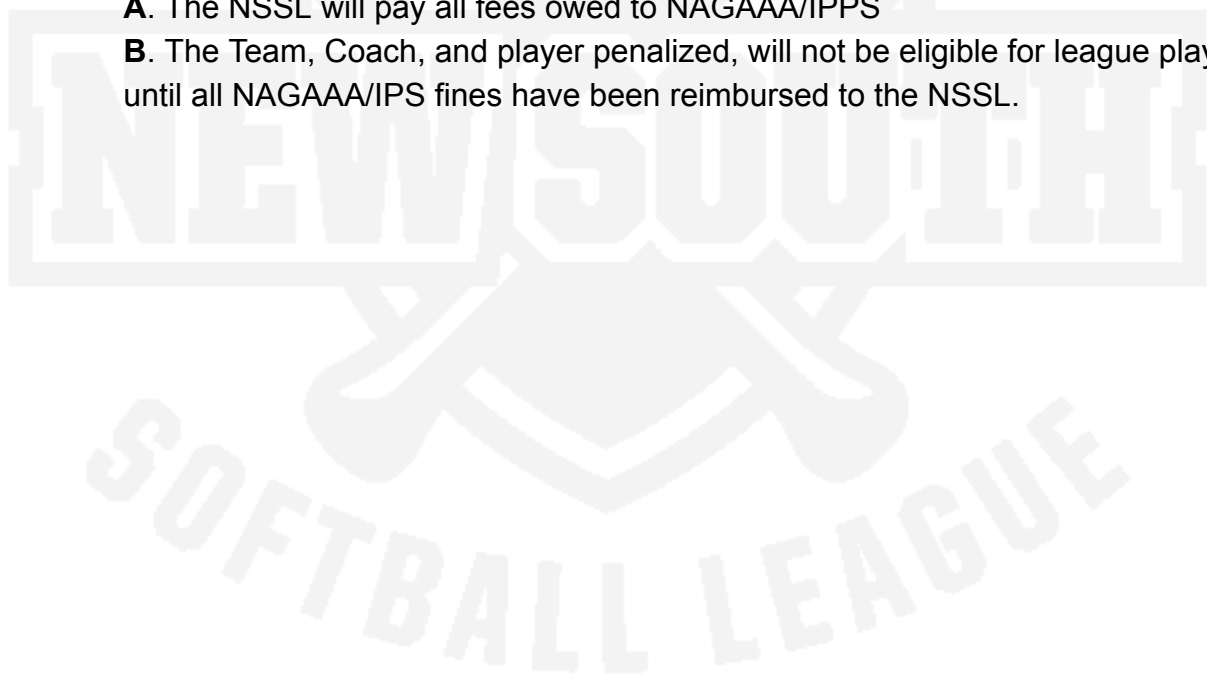
the player fee and return check fee (with certified funds or cash) are paid.

6.4.2 NAGAAA/IPS Gay Softball World Series Play - If a team wins the right to represent the NSSL in the NAGAAA/IPS GSWS, the following applies:

- A.** Until such time as the number of NSSL teams exceeds 20, the League shall only pay the entry fee for the number of berths allotted by NAGAAA/IPS per division and a Master's Team to the GSWS. GSWS funds allotted by the NSSL will only be distributed to the teams whose entry fee is paid for by the NSSL.
- B.** May pick up four eligible players from other NSSL teams as defined in Governing Manual Section 5.0.1.b.1A (Softball Code) (Teams entered in the GSWS must compete with the same roster that they submitted during the regular season with the following exceptions: (A) a team may add up to four (4) additional players, replacing players or filling empty slots on their regular season roster)
- C.** Must meet all eligibility requirements, regardless of classification, set forth by the NSSL and NAGAAA/IPS.

6.4.3 If a team is fined by NAGAAA/IPS at the GSWS, the following applies:

- A.** The NSSL will pay all fees owed to NAGAAA/IPPS
- B.** The Team, Coach, and player penalized, will not be eligible for league play until all NAGAAA/IPS fines have been reimbursed to the NSSL.



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SECTION 7: PENALTIES/CONDUCT

Penalties Regarding Eligibility of Players and Teams

7.1 Any team that cannot meet the requirement for the minimal number of eligible players nine (9) at game time will forfeit the game. If a second game is to be played, the team is eligible to play that game if the team has the required number of eligible players for that game. If it is agreed upon by both coaches that there will not be enough players for the next game, then they may call it as a forfeit by notifying the executive board at any time (hence, there is no need to wait until game time if both coaches agree to call a forfeit). If a team forfeits by Friday night, by midnight, prior to game play, they do not have to pay forfeiture fee.

If a team participating in the NSSL forfeits less than 24 hours in advance, they will be assessed a \$80 fee for each game forfeited thereafter. Teams will not be permitted to compete until forfeiture fee is paid. Fee must be paid to the treasurer or the commissioner.

7.2 If a team is ruled to have an ineligible player for any of the rules above, the game(s) this player played in as an ineligible player will be forfeited and marked as loss(es) on the schedule.

7.3 If a team loses a player for reasons of (1) ineligibility, or (2) ejection by an umpire, that team must have an eligible replacement player available. If there is no eligible replacement player available, the game results in a forfeit.

7.4 In the event that a team reaches 4 total forfeitures during the season, the team will be assessed a \$100 fine that must be paid prior to stepping on the field for next game play. In addition, the team is disqualified from World Series consideration.

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SECTION 8: PLAYER/TEAM RATINGS

Definition: The Player Rating System is a system used by NAGAAA/IPS and the NSSL to rate its players, and therefore its teams, for purposes of determining levels and caliber of play.

The Player Rating System will be determined by NAGAAA/IPS. This will be the only system used by the coaches of the NSSL for determining a team's rating for post-season play.

The NSSL Player Rating System will abide by seasonal guidelines in The Instruments of Governance of the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance. (NAGAAA)



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SECTION 9: SCHEDULE AND REGULATION GAME

9.1 For League play, the time limit for all regular season games will be 55 minutes unless otherwise set forth by the NSSL Executive Board.

9.2 Championship game will observe the one-hour time limit rule. Any championship game will have no time limit. In the event of a tie at the end of regulation, international tiebreaker rules will be in effect.

9.3 The Mercy Rule: For league play, a 20-run rule will be observed after 3 innings, 15-runs after 4 innings, or 10 runs after 5 innings. Should a team be ahead by any of the aforementioned scenarios, the game shall be called and be considered a complete game. Each mercy rule will be observed by all divisions (A, B, C, D and E) unless otherwise set forth by the NSSL Executive Board. There will be NO run rule for postseason championship games regardless of team divisions.

9.4 If at the end of the regular season, two teams are tied for first place, the following steps will be taken to break the tie:

- A.** best record in head to head competition.
- B.** one game playoff set by the NSSL Executive Board.

9.5 Over the fence home run rules will be enforced in each game according to the lowest rated division team playing. Any over the fence home run in excess of the limits listed below will be considered an inning ending out.

9.5.1 Each A Division team will be allowed 4 progressed to 6 over the fence home runs per game.

9.5.2 Each B Division team will be allowed 3 over the fence home runs per game.

9.5.3 Each C Division team will be allowed 1 over the fence home run per game.

9.5.4 Each D Division team will be allowed 0 over the fence home run per game.

9.5.5 Each E Division team will be allowed 0 over the fence home runs per game.

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SECTION 10: OFFICIATING

10.1 During the spring season and Southern Shootout, the league shall provide accredited USA umpires for each game.

10.2 During the fall season the league shall provide appointed umpires by the Executive Board



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SECTION 11: PROTEST GUIDELINES

11.1 All Protests will be directed by the NSSL Protest Committee.

11.2 The NSSL Protest Committee will be comprised of five (5) coaches/designated team representatives, the league commissioner and/or assistant commissioner (if their team is not involved in the protest) and the home plate umpire from the game resulting in the protest. The selection of the five (5) designated reps asked to rule on a specific protest will be performed by the presiding member of the board, so long as the presiding member is not affiliated with either team involved in the protest. In order of succession, the presiding member will be the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Treasurer and Secretary.

11.3 The protesting team must pay a fee of \$50 to the home plate umpire by calling time out before the last out of the game and not taking more than five (5) minutes to give the umpire the money.

11.3.1 Protests may only be filed by a coach, assistant coach, or team manager.

11.4 Then, no longer than fifteen (15) minutes after that game is over, the protesting team must present to the NSSL Protest Committee a list of the player(s) being protested and the number of the question(s) they are protesting.

11.5 An additional \$25 fee will be assessed for each question for each player being protested.

11.6 All protests must follow the NAGAAA/IPS protest rules regarding player ratings.

11.7 The protesting team must identify the specific questions the player being protested can or cannot complete following the NAGAAA/IPS 28 Rating Question Guidelines.

11.8 The protesting team must have some form of back up for each protest (scorebook, etc.).

11.9 The Executive board reserves the right to submit any protests as they see fit.

11.10 If all protest questions are upheld, the \$50 protest fee will be returned.

11.11 In the event that a protest includes multiple protested ratings questions, the ruling of the protest committee to uphold at least one (1) question will constitute a valid protest

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and the \$100 fee will be returned.

11.12 If all protested questions are denied, the \$50 protest fee is forfeited.

11.13 If a team has 2 or more protests upheld in one season, the team will incur a \$100 fine and coach/manager will have to attend a ratings clinic.



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SECTION 12: DESIGNATED TEAM REPRESENTATIVE FOR PROTEST

A designated team representative (hereafter referred to as “DTR”) will be either a coach, manager or scorekeeper for the eligible team.



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SECTION 12: AMENDMENTS

AMENDMENT 22-10-16

Anything not expressly discussed and notated in the current NSSL bylaws will directly reflect the statements decided in the current IPS and/or USA bylaws.

AMENDMENT 23-01-08

For all General Council meetings:

- A. Should an Executive Board member be unable to attend, said member can join the meeting via phone and submit their respective report, but will be unable to vote on amendments.
- B. Should a team representative be unable to attend, said representative can join the meeting via phone, but will be unable to vote on amendments.

AMENDMENT 23-02-05

- A. No more than four players from a NSSL team that finishes top four at the GSWS may compete on the same team in the same division they competed at the GSWS in. If more than four players are on the same team, that team must compete in a higher division than they did at the GSWS if they intend to return to the GSWS.
- B. A team with more than four players from a top four finishing GSWS team may compete in the league in their current division as an exhibition team. Their results do not count towards final standings in the NSSL and they are ineligible as a team to travel to the GSWS.

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Appendix 1: NSSL Rules of Play

The City of Birmingham Park and Recreation Board is now the responsible party for George Ward Park. Any questions, comments or concerns for the Park or fields will need to be taken through them.

All divisions will follow USA rules and as modified below:

Pitch Height: 6 to 12 feet for all divisions.

Official Softball: Yellow 52/300 USA Ball

Game Time: No new inning will start after 55 minutes. In the event of a tie after the 55-minute time period has expired; the game shall proceed as provided in the section of these rules entitled "Tie Breaker."

Mercy rule: Observed in all divisions

- 20 run rule will be observed after 3 innings, or
- 15 runs after 4 innings, or
- 10 runs after 5 innings

Should a team be ahead by any of the aforementioned scenarios, the game shall be called and be considered a complete game.

Stealing: Stealing is not allowed in any division

Home Runs: Over the fence home run rules will be enforced in each game according to the lowest rated division team playing. Any over the fence home run in excess of the limits listed below will be considered an inning ending out. The over the fence home run rules are:

- Open B: 3 over the fence home runs unless playing C Division (1 home run)
- Open C: 1 over the fence home run unless playing D Division (0 home runs)
- Open D: 0 home runs allowed
- Open E: 0 home runs allowed

Courtesy Runners: One (1) courtesy runner per inning per team, including extra innings, and can be anyone on line-up including subs. If a team bats around in the inning, the same courtesy runner can be used for the same batter.

Pitch Count: All batters will begin with a 1-1 count and be allowed one extra foul ball.

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Short Handed Rule: Any team that cannot meet the requirement for the minimal number of eligible players nine (9) at game time will forfeit the game. If a second game is to be played, the team is eligible to play that game if the team has the required number of eligible players for that game. If it is agreed upon by both coaches that there will not be enough players for the next game, then they may call it as a forfeit by notifying the umpires at any time (hence, there is no need to wait until game time if both coaches agree to call a forfeit). If a team chooses to play with nine (9), the 10th player is an automatic out.

Forfeit Time: Game time will be considered forfeit time. There will be no grace periods given to any teams. Unless one or both teams are still in game play on another field.

Tie Breaker: Any game that is tied after regulation will continue using the tie breaker format. International Tiebreaker: If after time limit the game is tied, both teams will put the last out on second base and start the inning with regular pick count (1-1).



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Appendix 2: NSSL Grievance Guidelines

This document is intended to formalize the process for filing a grievance against a player, team or league official. The grievance process is not intended to replace, enhance or otherwise supplement the official NSSL Protest process, which shall be used specifically to address issues concerning player ratings, game-specific scoring errors and rules interpretations.

Grievance Process

1.1. The party wishing to file a grievance will notify the Assistant Commissioner, in writing, of the nature of the complaint.

1.2. Assistant Commissioner will determine if grievance falls outside of the areas covered under the official NSSL Protest guidelines. If it is determined that the incident falls under the guidelines of the Protest process, the Assistant Commissioner will instruct the appropriate party to file an official protest, and will inform the NSSL board of the guidance provided to the initiating party.

1.3. Assistant Commissioner will ask for evidence, as necessary and appropriate, to substantiate the basis for the grievance filing. Evidence may include, but is not limited to; witnesses, lineup cards, scorebooks, etc.

1.4. Assistant Commissioner will call for a special meeting of the NSSL Grievance Committee to be held no more than three (3) calendar days from the date the grievance was received. The Grievance Committee shall consist of:

- League Commissioner
- League Assistant Commissioner
- League Treasurer
- League Secretary
- League Public Relations Director
- League Statistician & Bylaws Director
- All Committee Chairs

1.5. The Assistant Commissioner will inform all parties of the grievance, the date and time of the special meeting. All parties will be required to attend the meeting in order to discuss the circumstances surrounding the incident(s) and to present and discuss the evidence supporting the grievance.

1.5.1 Attendance is preferred in person but virtual can be accommodated - though the party must have their camera on and at all times.

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1.6. Attendance at the special meeting shall be required of a minimum of five (5) of the appointed members of the Grievance Committee. Committee members may elect to attend via conference call if physical attendance is not possible.

1.7. Upon completion of the evidentiary portion of the special meeting, all parties will be dismissed, and the committee shall undertake discussion concerning the nature of the incident(s) and the appropriateness and applicability of disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to:

- Notice of Warning
- Single or Multiple Game Suspension
- Removal from League Office and/or Team Administrative Position
- Expulsion from NSSL

1.8. The League Secretary shall document the proceedings of the special meeting, including the individual votes of each committee member on any proposed disciplinary action.

1.9. Approval of any decision to invoke disciplinary action will require a simple majority (50%) of the Grievance Committee.

1.10. Assistant Commissioner will notify all parties of the decision of the Grievance Committee within 24 hours.

1.11. Assistant Commissioner will provide notification to the parties subject to the grievance (e.g. coach, player, etc.) within 48 hours of the following:

- that a grievance was filed
- the party that filed the grievance
- the nature of the grievance
- the evidence that was provided to support the grievance
- the decision of the Grievance Committee
- the governance surrounding any appeal of the Grievance Committee decision

2. Appeal Process

2.1. The party subject to the grievance shall notify the Assistant Commissioner, in writing, within 24 hours of the intent to file an appeal.

2.2. The Assistant Commissioner will ask for evidence, as necessary and appropriate, to substantiate the basis for the appeal.

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2.3. The Assistant Commissioner will call for a special meeting of the General Council NSSL Grievance Committee (as defined in section 1.4) to be held no more than three (3) calendar days from the date the appeal was received.

2.4. The Assistant Commissioner will inform all parties of the appeal of the date & time of the special meeting. All parties will be required to attend the meeting in order to discuss the circumstances surrounding the incident(s) and to present and discuss the evidence supporting the grievance. Failure of the parties to appear at the meeting, without advance notice, will be considered as relinquishment of the right to an appeal and acceptance of the decision of the General Council.

2.5. During such time as falls between the notification of the General Council decision and the special meeting, the parties subject to the grievance shall be considered members in good standing and therefore eligible to participate in any and all league functions, including regularly scheduled games.

2.6. Attendance at the special meeting shall be required of a minimum of five (5) of the General Council. Committee members may elect to attend via conference call if physical attendance is not possible.

2.7. Upon completion of the evidentiary portion of the special meeting, the appealing party will be dismissed and the committee shall undertake discussion concerning the appeal.

2.8. The League Secretary shall document the proceedings of the special meeting, including the individual votes of each committee member on the appeal motion.

2.9. The Assistant Commissioner will notify all parties of the decision of the Grievance Committee within 24 hours of the appeal hearing.

If the decision of the General Council calls for suspension from the NSSL, the Assistant Commissioner will inform all parties within 24 hours of the hearing. This notification is intended solely to prevent the member/player from attempting to participate in the affected games.

If the decision of the General Council calls for expulsion from the NSSL, the Assistant Commissioner will inform the league General Council within 24 hours of the hearing. This notification is intended solely to prevent the unintended offer to the dismissed

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member to join another team or to rejoin the league in the future.

If a member is expelled from the NSSL, in order to rejoin the league the member will be required to come before the league general council and request readmission. Approval to readmit the member to the league will require a 2/3 vote from the general council and is not subject to appeal.



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Appendix 3: NAGAAA Ratings Guidelines

PLAYER RATING GUIDELINES

Jurisdiction: This chapter shall be the jurisdiction of the Council and amended at any meeting. Any 743 amendment to this chapter requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Council for adoption and is effective in the 744 calendar year following the year the amendment was adopted, except that an amendment adopted at a winter 745 meeting of the Council requires a ninety percent (90%) vote to be effective at a sanctioned NAGAAA Tournament 746 in the same calendar year as the winter meeting.

SECTION 1 – DEFINITIONS

Definitions: The following definitions apply to this chapter:

At-bat – An at-bat is charged to a player following every plate appearance except when:

- 1) the player hits a sacrifice fly that scores a runner,
- 2) the player is awarded a base on balls, or
- 3) the third out occurs and the batter is not entitled to run to first base. Exception #3 shall not be considered if the batter is out due to a strike being a foul ball which ends the at-bat.

In the event of any discrepancy between this definition and the official scoring rules of the USA Softball (USA) and definition contained therein, the latest version of the USA Softball (USA) rules shall control.

Base Safely Reached on Error – A batter shall be credited with a base safely reached on error on the part of a defensive player(s) who is charged with an error by the scorekeeper.

Behind the player (for fly balls) – The area on the field starting directly to the right of the player, proceeding in a 180-degree arc behind the player and ending directly to the left of the player.

Cleanly fielding the ball – The player receives and controls the ball immediately while over their center of gravity (i.e. not on their knees, on the ground or off-balance) and does not cause any delay in making the next play (e.g., tags the runner, steps on the base, throws the ball to the appropriate place on the field).

Deliver multiple pitch techniques with accuracy – The ability to use arc, spin, location and movement of the ball to deliver various pitches (e.g. curve, change up, cutter / reverse curve, knuckle ball) that are called strikes or cause the batter to swing.

Directly at the Player – A ball hit at a player that does not require the player to move their feet, although it may cause the player to reach in any direction to make the play.

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Fly Ball – Any batted ball that is in the air for more than three (3) seconds but less than five (5) seconds

Ground Ball – Ball hit with a downward trajectory that makes contact with the ground in front of the player when hit directly at a player or in front of the bases when hit between players.

Hard Hit Ball / High Velocity – a ball hit greater than 250 feet (76.2m) in the air or a ground ball that would roll to a distance greater than 250 feet (76.2m), if not impeded

High Fly Ball – Any batted ball that is in the air for five (5) seconds or more.

Hit – A batted ball that allows the batter to reach base safely:

- 1) on a fair ball which settles on the ground, clears the fence, or strikes the fence before being touched by a fielder,
- 2) on a fair ball which is hit with such force or such slowness or which takes an unnatural bounce that it is impossible to field with ordinary effort in time to make an out,
- 3) when a fair ball which has not been touched by a fielder becomes dead because of touching the person or clothing of an umpire, or
- 4) when a fielder unsuccessfully attempts to retire a previous runner and in the scorer's judgment, the batter-runner would not have been retired at first base by perfect fielding.

A hit shall not be scored:

- 1) when a runner is forced out on a batted ball or would have been forced out except for a fielding error,
- 2) when a player fielding a batted ball retires a preceding runner with ordinary effort,
- 3) when a fielder fails in an attempt to retire a preceding runner, and in the scorer's judgment, the batter-runner could have been retired at first base, or
- 4) when a batter reaches first base safely as a result of a preceding runner being called out for interfering with a batted or thrown ball, or with a defensive player. In the event of any discrepancy between this definition and the official scoring rules of the USA Softball (USA) and the definition contained therein, the latest version of the USA Softball (USA) rules shall control.

In the Hole – A ball hit that requires a player to take 4-5 steps (12 feet (3.7m) or greater) in order to make the play.

Intentionally – See “on purpose”

Intentionally Place Hit a Ball – The batter executes getting on base and/or moving base runners for an advantage by hitting the ball to a specific place within their field of choice.

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Line Drive – a ball that from the point of contact rises vertically less than 10% of the total horizontal distance it travels, or in the case of a throw, a ball that from the point of release rises vertically less than 5% of the total horizontal distance it travels.

Medium Hit Ball / Medium Velocity – a ball hit 150 to 250 feet (45.7 to 76.2 meters) in the air or a ground ball that would roll to a distance of 150 to 250 feet (45.7 to 76.2 meters), if not impeded.

Modified batting average – The percentage resulting from the sum of a player's: 1) hits and 2) bases safely reached on error divided by the player's at-bats.

Off center of gravity – The player fields the ball from their knees, off one foot, while moving the opposite direction from the throw or while in the air.

On Purpose – with intent

Slow Hit Ball / Slow Velocity – a ball hit up to 150 feet (45.7m) or less in the air or a ground ball that would roll to a distance of less than 150 feet (45.7m), if not impeded.

Stopping the ball – The player prevents the ball from continuing beyond the player and causes it to remain in the vicinity of the player. The player is not able, however, to make the next play without delay.

Vicinity – within a step in any direction laterally of the player receiving the throw

Within a few steps – A ball hit that requires a player to take 2 – 3 steps (9 – 10 feet or 2.7 – 3 meters) in order to make the play.

(NOTE: In reference to the modified batting average, a batted ball resulting in a fielder's choice is not included in the definition of a hit and therefore is not included in the number of hits a player is recorded to calculate the modified batting average. The USA Softball Rules and NAGAAA Governing Manual do not define a fielder's choice. A Fielder's Choice is understood to be an outcome of a batted ball where a preceding runner was put-out (or could have been in the judgment of the scorer) rather than the batter-runner. See lines **hit** for these results of a batted ball that do not constitute a hit. This note is explanatory on the definition of modified batting average and is not considered a governing rule. Added by Board of Directors February 17, 2019)

SECTION 2 – PLAYER RATING GUIDELINES

Rating Guidelines: The following are the official rating guidelines of this organization:

Directions:

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2.1 Read the following Statement of Purpose: This form is intended to be used as a tool to assist those responsible for rating players so ratings may be fair and consistent across all levels of play and across all leagues in the Open Division. All questions are intended to determine if a player possesses a skill or skills necessary for softball.

2.2 Read and understand the definitions of the various terms used in ratings in the definitions section of this chapter.

2.3 Answer YES or NO for each question.

2.4 Many questions have multiple parts. A YES to ANY one part is a YES to the question.

2.5 All questions will begin with the phrase: DOES THE PLAYER HAVE THE ABILITY TO...

DIRECTIONS: Review each of the following questions for every player. Does the player have the ability to perform the listed skill at the specified threshold for that question? If so, the player receives a YES for the question. A YES to any part of a question is a YES to that question.						
HITTING	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	NOTE: Players with a YES to Question 3 cannot participate in the E Division. Players with a YES to Question 5 cannot participate in the D or E Divisions. See Governing Manual Section 20.35.
	Hits a fair ball with low velocity. (60% threshold)	Hits a fair ball with medium velocity. (60% threshold)	Hits a fair ball with high velocity. (20% threshold)	Hits a fair ball with high velocity. (60% threshold)	Hits a fly ball 300' (91.4m) or more. (5% threshold)	
Modified Batting Average	<i>Batting against</i>	Question 6	Question 7	Question 8	Question 9	NOTE: The following questions are linked: 1 – 4, 6 – 9, 10 – 13, 15 – 22, and 23 – 28. A YES to the highest question in a linked set earns the player all those questions (i.e., a player with YES on Q21, will also be given Q15 – Q20)
	E Division	≥ .800	≥ .850	≥ .900	≥ .950	
	D Division	≥ .600	≥ .700	≥ .800	≥ .900	
	C Division	≥ .500	≥ .600	≥ .700	≥ .800	
	B Division	≥ .400	≥ .500	≥ .600	≥ .700	
A Division	≥ .300	≥ .400	≥ .500	≥ .600		
RUNNING SPEED (No Threshold; Ability to do it one time qualifies for a YES)						
DIRECTIONS: Ability to run from a stopped and standing ready position, runs from home plate to first base, one base to the next, or third base to home plate (i.e., 70 feet or 21.3 meters) in less than:						
Question 10	Question 11	Question 12	Question 13	Question 14		
5.0 seconds	4.5 seconds	4 seconds	3.5 seconds	3 seconds		

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FIELDING (INFIELD)	Question 15	Question 16	Question 17	Question 18	Question 19	Question 20	Question 21	Question 22
Ground Ball/Line Drive Low Velocity	Cleanly fields a ball hit with low velocity directly at the player OR Stops the ball hit with low velocity directly at the pitcher.	Cleanly fields a ball hit with low velocity within a few steps (9 – 10 feet or 2.7-3 meters) of the player OR Cleanly fields a ball hit with low velocity directly at the pitcher.	Cleanly fields a ball hit with low velocity in the hole (>12 feet (3.7 meters) or 4-5 steps) away from the player.					
Ground Ball/Line Drive Medium Velocity			Cleanly fields a ball hit with medium velocity directly at the player OR Stops the ball hit with medium velocity directly at the pitcher.	Cleanly fields a ball hit with medium velocity within a few steps (9-10 feet or 2.7-3 meters) of the player OR Cleanly fields a ball hit with medium velocity directly at the pitcher.	Cleanly fields a ball hit with medium velocity in the hole (>12 feet (3.7 meters) or 4-5 steps) away from the player.			
Ground Ball/Line Drive High Velocity			Stops the ball hit with high velocity directly at the player.	Cleanly fields a ball hit with high velocity directly at the player OR Stops the ball hit with high velocity directly at the pitcher.	Stops a ball hit with high velocity within a few steps (9-10 feet or 2.7-3 meters) of the player OR Cleanly fields a ball hit with high velocity directly at the pitcher.	Cleanly fields a ball hit with high velocity within a few steps (9-10 feet or 2.7-3 meters) of the player.	Stops a ball hit with high velocity in the hole (>12 feet (3.7 meters) or 4-5 steps) away from the player.	Cleanly fields a ball hit with high velocity in the hole (>12 feet (3.7 meters) or 4-5 steps) away from the player.
Fly Ball	Catches a fly ball hit directly at the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 15 feet (4.6 meters) to the sides/front of the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 30 feet (9.1 meters) to the sides/front of or 15 feet (4.6 meters) behind the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 45 feet (13.7 meters) to the sides/front of or 30 feet (9.1 meters) behind the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 60 feet (18.3 meters) to the sides/front of or 45 feet (13.7 meters) behind the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 75 feet (22.9 meters) to the sides/front of or 60 feet (18.3 meters) behind of the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 90 feet (27.4 meters) to the sides/front of or 75 feet (22.9 meters) behind of the player.	Catches a fly ball hit >90 feet (27.4 meters) to the sides/front of or >75 feet (22.9 meters) behind of the player.

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FIELDING (OUTFIELD)	Question 15	Question 16	Question 17	Question 18	Question 19	Question 20	Question 21	Question 22
Ground Ball Medium Velocity	Cleanly fields a ball hit with medium velocity directly at the player.	Cleanly fields a ball hit with medium velocity within 15 feet (4.6 meters) of the player	Cleanly fields a ball hit with medium velocity within 30 feet (9.1 meters) of the player	Cleanly fields a ball hit with medium velocity within 45 feet (13.7 meters) of the player	Cleanly fields a ball hit with medium velocity within 60 feet (18.3 meters) of the player	Cleanly fields a ball hit with medium velocity within 75 feet (22.9 meters) of the player	Cleanly fields a ball hit with medium velocity within 90 feet (27.4 meters) of the player	
Ground Ball High Velocity		Cleanly fields a ball hit with high velocity directly at the player.	Cleanly fields a ball hit with high velocity within 15 feet (4.6 meters) of the player	Cleanly fields a ball hit with high velocity within 30 feet (9.1 meters) of the player	Cleanly fields a ball hit with high velocity within 45 feet (13.7 meters) of the player	Cleanly fields a ball hit with high velocity within 60 feet (18.3 meters) of the player	Cleanly fields a ball hit with high velocity within 75 feet (22.9 meters) of the player	Cleanly fields a ball hit with high velocity within 90 feet (27.4 meters) of the player
Fly Ball	Catches a fly ball hit directly at the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 15 feet (4.6 meters) to the sides/front of the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 30 feet (9.1 meters) to the sides/front of or 15 feet (4.6 meters) behind the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 45 feet (13.7 meters) to the sides/front of or 30 feet (9.1 meters) behind the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 60 feet (18.3 meters) to the sides/front of or 45 feet (13.7 meters) behind the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 75 feet (22.9 meters) to the sides/front of or 60 feet (18.3 meters) behind the player.	Catches a fly ball hit within 90 feet (27.4 meters) to the sides/front of or 75 feet (22.9 meters) behind the player.	Catches a fly ball hit >90 feet (27.4 meters) to the sides/front of or >75 feet (22.9 meters) behind the player.

THROWING AND PITCHING					
Question 23	Question 24	Question 25	Question 26	Question 27	Question 28
Throw 50 feet (15.2 meters) with line drive (regardless of accuracy)	Throw 50 feet (15.2 meters) with line drive and accuracy	Throw 70 feet (21.3 meters) with line drive and accuracy	Throw 100 feet (30.5 meters) with line drive and accuracy	Throw 150 feet (45.7 meters) with line drive and accuracy	Throw >200 feet (61 meters) with line drive and accuracy
	Pitch a strike	Vary the height, depth and location of the pitch while maintaining accuracy	Deliver multiple pitch techniques while maintaining accuracy		
Throw 70 feet (21.3 meters) (regardless of arc or accuracy)	Throw 70 feet (21.3 meters) with line drive (regardless of accuracy)	Throw 100 feet (30.5 meters) with line drive (regardless of accuracy)	Throw 150 feet (45.7 meters) with line drive (regardless of accuracy)	Throw >200 feet (61 meters) with line drive (regardless of accuracy)	Throw 150 feet (45.7 meters) with line drive and accuracy while off center of gravity (e.g., from knees, from one foot)
	Throw 100 feet (30.5 meters) (regardless of arc or accuracy)	Throw 150 feet (45.7 meters) (regardless of arc or accuracy)	Throw >200 feet (61 meters) (regardless of arc or accuracy)	Throw 100 feet (30.5 meters) with line drive and accuracy while off center of gravity (e.g., from knees, from one foot)	

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Appendix 4: NSSL Ratings Committee

SECTION 1: RATINGS COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

1.1 The Ratings Committee will require a minimum of five (5) members, including the chair, to be considered complete.

1.1.1 A minimum five (5) members from the committee will constitute a quorum in case of voting.

1.1.2 There is no maximum number of people that can make up the committee. Ideally, a member from each league team would constitute a full committee.

1.1.3 No more than one representative per team shall sit on the Ratings Committee. This also means that no representative shall be on the same team as the Ratings Chair. This is to keep the integrity of the committee so no team has more say than another.

1.1.4 In the occurrence that a current member of the Ratings Committee should be elected to a board position – they will immediately forfeit their spot on the Ratings Committee. The Ratings Committee Chair will then find a replacement to take their spot.

1.1.5 In the case that the league has a team participating that is not eligible to qualify for GSWS – the general council will vote on the ability of that team to have a representative sit on the ratings committee.

1.1.6 Those wishing to join the Ratings Committee must submit, in writing, their request to the NSSL Exec board email (nsslexecboard@gmail.com).

1.1.7 Ratings chair, commissioner, and assistant commissioner will approve members of the ratings committee.

SECTION 2: RATINGS EVALUATIONS

2.1 The ratings committee is to attend new player clinics to rate new players. A minimum of five (5) members from the committee will be required to be in attendance to fulfill the duties required of the committee.

2.2 Ratings committee members may only work on ratings reviews outside their division.

2.2.1 For E Division ratings question eligible committee members must play in any of the following divisions: D, C, B, A, or Masters.

2.2.2 For D Division ratings question eligible committee members must play in any of the following divisions: E, C, B, A, or Masters.

2.2.3 For C Division ratings question eligible committee members must play in any of the following divisions: E, D, B, A, or Masters.

2.2.4 For B Division ratings question eligible committee members must play in any of the following divisions: E, D, C, A, or Masters.

2.2.5 For A Division ratings question eligible committee members must play in any of the following divisions: E, D, C, B, or Masters.

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2.2.6 For Masters Division ratings question eligible committee members must play in any of the following divisions: E, D, C, B, or A.

2.3 Ratings committee and chair will consider all ratings reviews.

2.4 Ratings committee business is to only be discussed between the committee, the chair, and the NSSL executive board.

2.5 CURRENT PLAYERS – Those players who played in the NSSL from 2021 on will start with current ratings in the NAGAAA database entered at the conclusion of the previous Spring season.

2.5.1 Any player wishing to be rerated before the start of the new Spring season will do one of the following:

- Attend a New Player Rating Clinic. The player must submit in writing a request to the NSSL Executive Board email (nsslexecboard@gmail.com) to be rerated during the clinic.
- Request in writing to the NSSL Executive Board email (nsslexecboard@gmail.com) to be rerated during the Spring/Fall Season by the Ratings Committee.

2.6 TRANSFERRING PLAYERS – Those players coming to NSSL from another NAGAAA league will start with ratings submitted into the NAGAAA database by their former league's Commissioner. Players wanting to be rerated must follow the same procedures as laid out above for current players.

2.7 NEW PLAYERS – Those players never having played in the NSSL or another NAGAAA member city league must attend a New Player Rating Clinic to receive a rating. Those players who cannot attend a New Player Rating Clinic must be rated within by the ratings committee or assume the highest rating for their division.

2.7.1 A team's coach/manager is responsible for notifying the NSSL Executive Board in writing at the NSSL Executive Board email (nsslexecboard@gmail.com) of new players (those players without NAGAAA database ratings) being added to their roster. Any new player must be rated by the ratings committee prior to competition or assume the highest rating for their division.

2.7.2 Any new player competing with an NSSL team at a tournament must be rated by the ratings committee prior to competition. If they cannot be rated beforehand, the new player must adopt the highest rating for their respective division until such time as they can be rated by the committee.

2.8 Coaches/managers will submit roster one (1) week prior to the start of spring and fall season. This is so that the Ratings Committee and/or NSSL Executive Board has to time verify ratings.

2.9 Commissioner, assistant commissioner, and/or ratings chair will verify ratings in the NAGAAA database prior to the start of season.

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2.10 In the case of ratings question changes made by the NAGAAA council at summer and/or winter meetings, coaches will rerate players on their own with new roster submissions.

2.10.1 If a new ratings question change causes a player to be eligible to play in a division lower than the one that the current NAGAAA database rating has them eligible to play in, the coach of said player will need to notify the Ratings Chair in writing and that change will need to be approved.

2.10.2 All new roster submissions with changes will still be verified by the appropriate parties before entering new ratings into the NAGAAA database at season end.

SECTION 3: RATINGS REVIEW

3.1 A player and/or coach/manager of a team must submit a request for ratings review to amend a player's current rating

3.1.1 The request must include the specific questions to be reviewed. A maximum of two (2) questions per player, per review request.

3.1.2 Request forms will be available on NSSL website (newsouthsoftball.com) for those requesting a ratings review. Forms are to be emailed to the ratings chair email (nsslratingschair@gmail.com) and will be reviewed by Ratings Chair.

3.1.3 Requests for ratings review on a player can be submitted from the start of season until the half way point of said season. The Ratings Committee will have fifteen (15) days from the day they receive the request to come to a decision.

3.1.4 Each team is allowed to request a maximum of two (2) ratings reviews per season in regards to teams that are not their own. This does not mean two (2) per team, but two (2) total reviews. For any team wishing to request a review for more than two (2) players in a season, that team must do so in the form of a protest and follow protest guidelines laid out in the NSSL bylaws.

3.2 Ratings committee will review players' skills. They will determine whether the player can or cannot do the skill(s) in question. A minimum of three (3) Ratings Committee members will be required to review each player and the skill(s) in question.

3.2.1 These evaluations can be done by watching one of the following: league play, team practices, pool play and/or tournament games.

3.2.2 Ratings Committee members will conduct reviews and fill out required forms. These forms will be provided to members of the committee to ensure evaluations are consistent. Forms will cover throwing, fielding, and hitting/running. These forms will also be available on the NSSL Website for anyone to view.

3.2.3 Coaches and the player in question will be notified of the ratings review request after the Ratings Committee has evaluated the player in question. This is to prevent the player being made aware and be given the opportunity to affect the ratings review findings. They will only be told that a review has been requested. No official information will be given until the findings have been submitted to the Ratings Chair and voted on by the Ratings Committee. At no point will the coach or player be told who made the request for review.

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3.3 All findings will be submitted to the ratings chair. All findings will be compiled. Once compiled, the results will be presented to the eligible Ratings Committee members to vote on. If more than 70% of the ratings committee are in agreement on players ability to complete the skill(s), the Ratings Chair will submit a decision to change rating to the NSSL Executive Board. If less than 70% of the ratings committee are in agreement on players' inability to complete the skill(s), the Ratings Chair will submit the decision not to change rating to the NSSL Executive Board. The NSSL Executive Board will inform the coach/manager of the player of the Ratings Committee decision.

3.3.1 Eligible Ratings Committee members are considered those outside the division of the player being evaluated per Section 1.8 of the Ratings Committee Bylaws.

3.4 Ratings review requests may be submitted by any of the following parties

3.4.1 The player wishing to have their own rating changed.

3.4.2 The player's coach/manager.

3.4.3 Any coach/manager wanting an opposing team player's skills reviewed.

3.5 Coaches/managers can voluntarily increase their players rating at any point in the season without review from ratings chair, ratings committee, or the NSSL Executive Board.

3.6 Players requesting to drop their rating based on an injury must request this change within two months of the onset of said injury.

3.6.1 The Ratings Chair, Ratings Committee, and/or NSSL Exec Board hold authority to request proof of injury. These parties will deem what will be considered proof on a case-by-case basis.

3.6.2 If the change is approved, the above-mentioned parties hold the right to reassess a player's rating change after one (1) full Spring and one (1) full Fall season have passed.

SECTION 4: RATINGS REVIEW APPEALS

4.1 Prior to finalization of players rating change by the rating chair - A player, and/or coach/manager on behalf of the player, may make an appeal for against the revision of their rating.

4.1.1 If a person would like to appeal a player rating (their own or that of another player) that was evaluated by the Ratings Committee, said person must submit in writing an appeal request to the Ratings Chair email (nsslratingschair@gmail.com) no later than seven (7) days after being informed of the Ratings Committee's decision.

4.1.2 The NSSL Executive Board, the Ratings Chair, and AT LEAST one (1) of the Ratings Committee members who evaluated the player will hold a Player Ratings Appeal meeting. This meeting MUST take place prior to GSWS and prior to the NAGAAA deadline for submitting league final player ratings.

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4.1.3 The NSSL Executive Board will provide at least five (5) days advance notice of this Player Ratings Appeal meeting specifying date, time, and place of meeting.

4.1.4 The Player Ratings Appeal meeting will follow Protocol of Appeals laid out in NSSL Bylaws. Once all information has been provided, the NSSL Executive Board will decide on the final player rating and provide that information at the conclusion of the Player Rating Appeal meeting. **THIS DECISION WILL BE FINAL.**

4.1.5 The Commissioner has veto power ability throughout this process to make sure integrity is upheld at all times. However, this veto power is not able to be used on the final vote count of the NSSL Executive Board.

4.2 After a rating review and/or ratings appeal, the Commissioner and/or Ratings Committee Chair will update the changes in the NAGAAA database

4.3 Once a rating is called for review, the player must wait six (6) months from the date they were informed of the Ratings Committee's decision to request a new ratings review. If a player, or a coach/manager on their behalf, requested an appeal the player must wait one (1) full calendar year from the date of their Player Rating Appeal meeting to request a new ratings review.

SECTION 5: PROTESTS DURING NSSL SEASON

5.1 Ratings chair will sit on all protests during the season.

5.2 Protests will continue to follow the procedure set out in the NSSL Bylaws.

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Appendix 5: Social Media Guidelines

4.1 STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING.

4.1.1. The NSSL understands that no members are employed by NSSL but joined of their own free will. NSSL understands that, as such, players can use their social media platforms freely to express their privately held beliefs and concerns. By acknowledging the NSSLs understanding, members of NSSL agree that they must maintain a level of professionalism and safety for themselves and others and agree to adhere to the social media guidelines laid forth here.

4.2 GUIDELINES

4.2.1 NO DEROGATORY TERMS

Members of the NSSL are aware of the league's focus on creating a safe space for members of the LGBTQIA+ community to enjoy the sport of softball and, as such, express their status as a member or ally of that community when joining NSSL. Members agree to refrain from the use of terms known to be derogatory toward the LGBTQIA+ community. Doing so strengthens the safe space the NSSL strives to create.

4.2.2 NO BULLYING

Members of the NSSL agree to refrain from any forms of bullying when talking on social media to people in regards to any NSSL function, tournaments, including but not limited to NAGAA cities, the GSWS, and NAGAA cup. This time frame includes directly before, during, and directly after the aforementioned events. Members can express comments/concerns/beliefs freely but agree to do so without threats, derogatory language, or other verbiage that could reflect negatively on the NSSL.

4.2.3 BE RESPECTFUL AND RESPONSIBLE

Members agree to refrain from the use of hateful language toward the NSSL, its members, and other NAGAA city leagues and/or members on social media posts.

4.2.4. OWNERSHIP OF BELIEFS

NSSL members agree to specify that beliefs posted on social media when creating posts about NSSL functions, tournaments, including but not limited to NAGAA cities, the GSWS, and NAGAA Cup are their own and do not represent the beliefs of the NSSL.

4.3 EXECUTIVE BOARD RESPONSIBILITY

4.3.1 Executive Board members agree to refrain from involving themselves on social media "hot" topics without approval from the rest of the Executive Board. While Executive Board members social medias are their own, the Executive Board members are the face of the NSSL and, as such, are also considered the voice of the NSSL. That voice must be in unison. "Hot" topics can be considered such things as debates, fights, and/or anything that could paint the NSSL in a negative light.

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Appendix 6: ADA Guidelines

The NSSL ADA Guidelines will follow the procedures voted on by NAGAAA.

The following Rules may be used in the event a person is determined to be an ADA Player. In order for these ADA Flex Player, EP and DP rules to apply, the ADA player's specific disability shall correspond to the need for the application of these Flex Player, EP and DP rules.

A. Teams using a physically challenged player on offense or defense must have 11 players. If the physically challenged player can play both, 10 players are needed.

B. When a physically challenged person plays offense only, the team will follow the EP rule as written. There would be 11 hitters including the ADA player, and only 10 who play defense.

C. When a physically challenged player plays defense only, they will be listed as the FLEX and placed last in the line-up. The team has the option to bat 10 or 11 players (if the EP is also used). When using a FLEX, it must be made known prior to the start of the game.

D. If a team starts the game with the FLEX option, the FLEX player can never play offense. If this person for any reason cannot continue to play and the team has no other physically challenged player for a substitute, the EP can now play defense.

E. The FLEX position has the same re-entry status as any other starting position as long as the person substituted is also determined to be physically challenged under the ADA program. The original FLEX player may re-enter only in the same spot in the line-up.

F. (Coed) When a FLEX or two FLEX players, one male and/or one female are used, the name(s) must be inserted at the end of the line-up. The EP or two EP's can be listed anywhere in the first 10 positions. Note: This special rule has been adopted to accommodate the athlete who is physically challenged. The intent is not to change the game and/or not to deprive any player from playing who would normally play, therefore, when using the EP, the normal EP rules will be followed including substitutions and re-entry. If the EP is used in addition to the FLEX, the FLEX must play defense and any of the other 11 players will be eligible to play defense. Only 11 are allowed to bat.

G. Any eligible player on the official line-up, including available substitutes, may be used as a courtesy runner for an ADA player. Unlimited courtesy runners are allowed each inning.

H. A participant who is hearing-impaired may use a sign language interpreter or other auxiliary hearing aid during play to assist that hearing-impaired participant. A sign language interpreter shall be allowed in the dugout, on the field of play (fair or foul

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territory), or in other areas in order to be able to provide communication to the hearing-impaired participant, but such sign language interpreter shall be subject to any other rules, policies or practices generally applicable to participants, including submitting to and passing an annual background check screening, if applicable. Any concerns, issues or requests concerning the specific location of such interpreters on the field of play shall be resolved by the umpire(s) during gameplay and such concerns or requests shall be addressed to and resolved by the applicable Local Association Member, league, tournament director, and/or event organizer in advance of gameplay. It is highly recommended that participants provide notice of such requests to the applicable Local Association Member, league, tournament director, and/or event organizer sufficiently in advance of and prior to or during the league or tournament registration process prior to the start of a season or tournament.

I. Subject to the requirements of this rule, any player with a disability, including a diabetic condition, who needs to come out of the ball game while on offense or defense due to the disability, including when batting due to a sugar imbalance caused by diabetes, may have a replacement player substitute for the player until such time as the disability subsides. In order to qualify under this rule, the player with the disability must be disclosed and noted by the player's manager to the umpire at the home plate conference at the outset of play. In the umpire's discretion, the umpire may waive the requirement that the subject player be disclosed at the home plate conference at the outset of play.

For purposes of this rule, the term disability shall be defined and construed consistent with the definition of disability in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

J. Any ADA Player may use a courtesy runner once they reach base. Any player may be used for the ADA player. A courtesy runner not reported is disqualified when brought to the umpire's attention by the offended team.