

# NORTHERN CT. GIRLS' SOFTBALL LEAGUE COACHES GUIDE

## Northern Ct. Girls Softball League Coaches Guide

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## Section 1: Level of Play

- The Northern Connecticut Girls' Softball League was established to support member Towns school softball programs. It seeks to encourage and enhance the development of fastpitch softball players at the elementary and secondary school levels in an organized, competitive environment.
- There are both travel and non-travel players participating. The High School Division IS NOT INTENDED FOR NOVICE fastpitch softball players. In the Middle School Division teams will have a number of experienced players but some teams will also have new, inexperienced players.
- **PLAYER SAFETY: FACE MASKS**—are strongly recommended for PITCHERS and infielders, especially 3BMEN.

In staffing a team, a roster of 12-16 players usually enables one to cover absences. Beginning in 2012, players may no longer play in more than one Division. Players entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade may play in EITHER the High School OR Middle School Divisions based on the coach's decision. Once the decision is made, no changes for the season are permitted.

It is recommended that each team carry at least 2 or more qualified pitchers and an equal number of catchers. Pitchers should be capable of throwing at least 50% strikes. In the High School Division, 60% is preferable. Coaches are well advised to ascertain their availability for the season and the tournament which can involve 2 or 3 games on Saturday and as many as four on Sunday.

Coaches' Responsibilities – The League is comprised of many teams spread over as many as 20 different towns. Coaches are requested to respond to e-mail and tel. inquiries in a timely manner. Delays affect families, players, League Volunteers, and umpires.

In particular, at the Team Sign-Up Meeting in the first week of June, Coaches should inform their Division Director of any dates they will not have a team due to major events such as: lack of a home field, school events, e.g. graduation, sports award night, Little League conflicts. Failure to do so at best, makes for extra work and stress, and at worst could result in a forfeited game.

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## Section 2 Player eligibility

. **Beginning in 2013, Coaches are responsible for registering player information on-line with USSSA. Rosters, birth certificates, and medical information for each player should be maintained in a special file which is available at all games.** See Rules Section 4a. regarding player eligibility

Also see Section 6 and Rule 5a regarding Tournament Eligibility.

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**Section 3: Budget Guidance: This section is only a rough guide. The League can not assume responsibility for unforeseen expenses that may arise. It would be wise to budget a reserve of an additional \$100-\$200. (Rainouts after games start, or late notification of cancellations, can result in extra umpiring fees.)**

- League Fees:
  - \* USSSA on line registration, \$40.
  - \* insurance, official softballs, and tournament expenses [\\$700-75 payable to Northern Ct. Girls Softball League](#) per team. See current year's rates in Overview.
- Umpires – 2 umpires for High School Division (HSD). 1 umpire for (MSD).
- Rates: Umpires are to be paid in CASH. NO CHECKS. One Umpire \$ 54/game. Two Umpires \$ 88/game. Split equally between the 2 teams.
- Each team pays one-half of the umpire fee at every game. (plus a reserve for games not completed due to weather).
- Assuming a 14 game season, H.S. Division which has 2 umpires per game, should estimate \$ 616 ( $88/2 \times 14$ ) & possibly a reserve of \$ 132 for incomplete games that need to be finished later on.
- 12u teams should budget \$27/game x 12 games (e) = \$324 plus approx. \$54 for discontinued games that need to be completed at another date.
- \* The cost of tournament umpires is paid for by your initial team fee.
- Uniforms – Range: \$30.00 to \$100.00 per player.
- Field fees: Check with your town.
- Equipment: **Review USSSA Rule Book**
  - \* Bats – Beginning in 2014 specially marked USSSA bats are mandatory. Rule 16.
    - 6 or more batting helmets with face masks and CHIN STRAPS
    - Catcher equipment
    - First Aid med kit
    - Ice or ice packs
    - H.S. Div.-METAL SPIKES are permitted. M.S.Div-NO Metal Spikes

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- League Fees may vary year to year depending on the strength of the league's treasury.

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- **Section 4: Uniforms, personal attire & safety**
- Players are required to wear a standard softball uniform shirt of the same color with a *unique* number clearly visible on the back of the shirt.
- It is recommended that a team wear athletic shorts of the same color with sliding pants and slider, or full length baseball / softball pants of the same color.
- For safety reasons, no jewelry of any kind is allowed on a player in a game. YOU SHOULD ALERT YOUR PLAYERS NOT TO HAVE THEIR EARS PIERCED IF IT NECESSITATES WEARING A TEMPORARY POST. SUCH POSTS MAY NOT BE WORN. TAPING OVER THEM IS NOT ACCEPTABLE. Medical-alert medals are not considered jewelry. A medical-alert medal must be taped and may be visible. The wearing of sunglasses over the eyes is allowed during games. (Religious and medical-alert medal verbiage is word-for-word the same as the CIAC rule.)
- Coaches are urged to strongly recommend their pitchers and infielders wear face masks. The advent of metal and composite bats makes this highly desirable.

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## Section 5: Scheduling, Postponements, reporting scores & score books

- Before the season starts when players give you their registration forms, you should determine the availability of your players. **You will want to construct a calendar of player vacations and other obligations precluding their attendance at games. In particular you will want to identify graduation, softball awards night and other school activities such as dances. In particular, be clear on the availability of your PITCHERS AND CATCHERS.**

The Division Director (DD) will circulate as soon as possible after June 1, a tentative schedule. You should have 4 days to 1.) forward it to parents for review and response, 2.) contact opposing coaches to re-schedule conflicts and 3.) advise DD of changes.

**Once the final schedules are posted, games may not be changed except for weather related causes. See Rule 6 regarding forfeitures.**

- Under Rule 6, in the event a game must be postponed because of weather, **it is the Home Coach's responsibility to TELEPHONE the Umpire Assignor and Opponent's Coach at least 90 minutes before start time.** Once a game has been postponed and rescheduled with an opponent, an e-mail must be sent to the Division Director, the opponent, League Secretary, and affected Umpire Assignor. In this manner all affected parties will receive the same information at the same time; and the posted schedule can be amended with confidence that all parties are in agreement. Failure to follow this procedure will result in your paying the umpires for an unplayed game.

Extreme heat: The **Division Director** will advise coaches if there is a Heat Advisory issued by the National Weather Service and give Home Team Coaches the option to postpone. **Home Team Coaches** must then follow the above procedures if they decide to postpone and re-schedule.

- The first and last name of all players in the line up for each game are required to be logged in the score book. This is for both the home and visiting team. Whenever possible, shirt numbers should also be included with the player's name.
- Coaches of the winning team should call in (or e-mail) their scores and results to the Web Administrator on the night of the game. Our Secretary puts in many late hours updating scores and standings on the web-site. Your timely cooperation is appreciated

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## Section 6: Tournaments, All-Star Games, MVP Selection Process

- It is strongly recommended coaches advise players and families at the beginning of the season about tournament and All-Star dates so you can ensure participation by as many as possible.
- Each Division has a season ending tournament in August which lasts all day Saturday and at least part of Sunday morning. On Saturday all teams compete in a round robin format. On Sunday all teams compete in a single elimination tournament. The total time required on Sunday is determined by how long a team continues to win. The championship game is usually concluded by late afternoon on Sunday.
- **Coaches should make every effort to notify their Division Director as to whether they will be able to field a team for the tournament one week prior to the tournament.**

Review Rule 5 to see what steps you must take to ensure your players are Tournament Eligible.

- [The On-Line Rosters modified for any players that did not make the 50% requirement should be communicated to the Division Director.](#)
- A minimum of **48 hours notice** is required for withdrawing a team from the tournament. Any team that must forfeit a game prior to the start, or during the tournament, must notify the League Director, Tournament Director, & Umpire Administrator as soon as possible. Any team that forfeits a game(s) prior to the start, or during the tournament, must declare the reason(s) for the forfeit to the League & Tournament Directors. The circumstances are subject to review by the League officers and Directors, which will then determine the further participation and standings of said team



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## Section 6 (cont'd)

### Most Valuable Player Nominations:

Prior to the tournament for each division, coaches are asked to nominate a player from their team for MVP. Trophies for MVP, and sometimes Co-MVP, are given out during the tournament. It is recommended that the coaches learn, as early as possible, your players' vacation plans that may conflict with their participation during the season. This can be helpful to the coach when evaluating players for nomination. Obviously talent and ability is a large part of choosing an MVP, however, commitment to the team and the League should play a part as well.

Each coach nominates a player on his/her team by email to their division director. Coaches then vote for MVP out of the compiled list. Coaches can not vote for the player on their team.

- After the tournament weekends, the League also hosts All-Star games for each division. While the intent is to recognize 2 to 3 outstanding players from each team, schedule conflicts sometimes result in middle-of-the-road players participating. In these cases this is a unique opportunity for such girls to receive recognition for their support and commitment of the team.
- Division winning coaches are expected to coach their All-Star teams.

## Section 7: Standards of Conduct

- \* The NCGSL is about kids and softball. It is expected that Coaches, parents, and players will demonstrate good sportsmanship and respect for opposing coaches, umpires, and league officials. Times have changed. For those of you who may have played in adult leagues or other *ultra competitive situations*, you are embarking on a different experience. The tone of this League, while competitive, emphasizes an educational approach to softball and the promotion of 'good sportsmanship'.
- Constructive criticism (i.e. goals for improvement) of an individual or a team's play are best made on the sidelines in a normal conversational voice rather than shouted out at players on the field in the heat of the game.

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### Section 7 (cont'd)

- Rule interpretation or other umpire related concerns should be addressed in a private one-on-one discussion. Umpire baiting, publicly announced criticisms or second guessing, emotional arguments, or any other behavior that does not respect officials as individuals, is unacceptable
- Should there be problems with an opposing player's behavior or rule infractions, the matter should be handled on a coach to coach, or coach to umpire basis rather than a coach / player confrontation.
- Trash talking, heckling, negative cheering, unacceptable language, are prohibited by all persons.
- *Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their player's parents and other fans.*
- Failure to conduct oneself in accordance with the League's goals, policies, or rules will lead to temporary or permanent suspension.

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## Section 8 Rules and Reminders

- NCGSL is a modified USSSA League. In certain instances we have adopted High School Federation rules and give them precedence over USSSA (especially with regard to pitching). Be sure to review these rules carefully.
- \* REMINDERS; These procedures are vital to the efficient and effective functioning of the League. Please follow them faithfully!

Please address any questions to your Division Director or [Jackmiller29@comcast.net](mailto:Jackmiller29@comcast.net) (860-306-6594).

**Thank you for your support,  
Officers and Directors, Northern Connecticut Girls Softball League**