

# Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Softball League

## CONSTITUTION

### PREAMBLE

We, the member schools of the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Softball League (WPISL), hereby submit ourselves to be governed by the Constitution, By-Laws and Rules and not to conflict with the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) rules for amateurs. Our organization functions for the purpose of promoting and organizing high school girls' slow-pitch softball, whereas, slow-pitch softball is a lifelong physical activity played throughout the United States that helps promote both a healthy lifestyle and wellness to the youth of our schools.

### ARTICLE I - NAME

**Section 1** The organization shall be known as the WPISL, or Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Softball League.

**Section 2** It shall be the purpose of the league to:

- A. Promote girls' slow-pitch softball as a high school and junior high school sport.
- B. Organize the league into sections and set schedules.
- C. Encourage sportsmanship and fair play.
- D. Enforce the rules.

**Section 3** This league shall be conducted as a non-profit organization, organized and operated at all times exclusively for charitable and educational purposes, and to support and develop female amateur slow-pitch softball athletes.

### ARTICLE II - QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERS

**Section 1** Member - This league will accept as "Members" any school district interested in slow-pitch softball within the jurisdiction of the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League (WPIAL) and classified as a high school (secondary level) educational institution as defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. School districts outside the WPIAL, but within the jurisdiction of Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) may be considered for membership.

**Section 2** League Representative - This league will recognize one and only one “Member” organization from each school district. Each “Member” organization shall submit the name of that organization’s League Representative. That person will be recognized as that Member’s League Representative as long as both the representative and Member organization remain in good standing or until the Member organization submits, in writing, the name of a new League Representative. If there is an internal dispute as to a Member’s League Representative, the Board of Director’s reserves the right to temporarily suspend that Member organization’s voting privileges until such time as an agreed upon League Representative is presented to the Board of Directors.

**Section 3** Members are required to have in place high standards for academics and sportsmanship. Members failing to maintain high standards for academics and sportsmanship will be subject to possible sanctions, including written warnings, probation, suspension or even expulsion from the league.

### **ARTICLE III - ELECTIONS & DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

**Section 1** The WPISL shall have eight-member Board of Directors which shall be comprised of two appointed members, or Appointees, and six elected Officers.

A. Appointees - The Appointees shall provide direction, leadership, historical value, and stability to the association. If an Appointee resigns or in the opinion of the remaining board members fails to participate in league activities for a year the Appointee may be removed from his/her position based upon a majority vote by the other board members. The remaining board members of the WPISL shall select a new Appointee who they believe will provide direction, leadership, and stability to the association. All new Appointee’s terms shall be three (3) years. At the conclusion of the three (3) year term, the officers shall select a new Appointee or renew the existing Appointee for a term of three (3) years. The term shall begin immediately after the Appointee has been appointed. If an Appointee is elected to the WPISL Board, see Item B (3) below.

B. Elected Officers - The membership shall elect a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, League Scorekeeper, and Director of Publicity at the annual organization meeting and in accordance with the voting procedures identified

herein. Each elected office will be a two-year term. The election to select the President, Scorekeeper, and Director of Publicity will be conducted on even numbered years. The election for the Vice-President, Secretary and Treasure will be conducted on odd numbered years. Should an elected officer resign or the office become vacant the Board should appoint a person to temporarily fill the position, except for the President (see below). If an elected officer resigns or the office becomes vacant prior to completion of the first year of that officer's two-year term, an election shall be conducted at the next annual organization meeting to fill that office. However to keep the staggered election system, the term of office for that special elected officer shall be for only one-year. The six elected officers shall perform the duties as identified for their office as described herein. The elected officer's terms begin upon conclusion of the annual organization meeting and end at the conclusion of the following year's annual organization meeting.

1. Nominations and elections for officers shall take place at the annual organization meeting.
2. All member representatives, coaches, and assistant coaches, scorekeepers and individuals who have previously served as an officer in the WPISL are eligible for nomination and election as officers.
3. No board member shall hold more than one elected or appointed position at the same time. Should an appointee Board Member be elected to an office or appointed by the Board to fill a vacant office, the Board shall appoint a person to fill the appointee position until the conclusion of the elected officer's term or the appointee's term, whichever comes first.
4. If an "Elected Officer" position becomes vacated, the Board will appoint, by majority vote, someone to serve in that position for the remainder of that term. (Exception) If the President's position becomes vacated, the Vice President will become President and the board will appoint someone to serve as Vice President with both positions lasting for the remainder of their terms.
5. An officer must maintain the standards set forth in the Board of Director's Code of Conduct and their organization must be in good standings with

the WPISL throughout the term or face possible removal by a majority vote of the other board members.

- C. Adhering to Robert's Rules of Order - When votes are made by the Board of Directors, the President shall not cast a vote, except for breaking a tie.

**Section 2** The following include, but are not limited to, a list of duties for each of the elected positions:

**DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT**

- A. Shall schedule and preside over all meetings of the WPISL.
- B. Shall appoint committees as may be necessary. In the absence of volunteers to chair committees, the President shall appoint committee chairs.
- C. Shall enforce the rules and regulations of the WPISL.
- D. Shall oversee the board's appointment (by majority vote) in case of a vacancy of either an elected position or Appointee.
- E. Oversees rescheduling of postponed games, when necessary.

**DUTIES OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

- A. Shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President.
- B. Oversees rescheduling of postponed games, when necessary.
- C. Oversees the preparation and execution of that year's Varsity playoffs. This includes being liaison with the host team each year.

**DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY**

- A. Shall record the minutes of all meetings.
- B. Shall send all written correspondences to the Board of Directors, Member Representatives and head coaches.
- C. Shall assist the Director of Publicity.
- D. Shall send agenda and attachments two weeks prior to any meeting.
- E. Shall gather all information pertinent to a rule modification/addition request and/or Exception request and put it in the proper format to present to the members by the proper deadline.

**DUTIES OF THE TREASURER**

- A. Shall establish and maintain an account with fidelity in the name of the WPISL in a recognized banking institution and in accordance with Section 4 below.
- B. Shall furnish a financial statement to the WPISL officers. The financial statement must show all current income, interest, and any checking account activity and be available for every board or general membership meeting.
- C. The position of Treasurer shall keep all financial record data for a period of at least five years.
- D. Shall purchase trophies and awards.
- E. Will procure and maintain the league insurance.

**DUTIES OF THE LEAGUE SCOREKEEPER**

- A. Shall compile an accurate record of all Varsity, Junior Varsity and Junior High scores and submit information for the league website in a timely fashion.
- B. Shall keep all team rosters and uniform numbers.
- C. Shall post weekly results and updated standings that must be made available to all schools in the WPISL.
- D. Shall provide statistics and results for league publicity.
- E. Shall fulfill duties defined in the By-laws, Rule 2, (Rosters).
- F. During season, reports weekly results, non-submittal results, rescheduled games and non-rescheduled games to the Board of Directors. Generally, results should be reported no later than 3 days after the scheduled date of the game(s).

**DUTIES OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLICITY**

- A. Shall develop, maintain, and implement a Plan to promote the WPISL.
  - 1. The Plan shall include but not be limited to:
    - a. Means and methods to recruit new members;
    - b. Means and methods to maintain current members;
    - c. Means and methods to assist members to achieve club sports status and recognition in their school district;
    - d. Means and methods to promote the league through public media sources.
- B. Shall assist the President, Secretary and Scorekeeper regarding developing and checking media, website, and informational releases.
- C. Coordinate fundraising duties.

**ADDITIONAL DUTIES TO BE ASSIGNED EACH YEAR - (after elections) –**

A. The President will assign additional tasks, as deemed necessary, to the Board of Directors, based upon their experience and availability to handle each task. These tasks include, but are not limited to:

1. The liaison between league and schools with respect to club/pending club status.
2. The intermediary between the league and umpire association(s).

**Section 3** The Treasurer, with assistance from the Board of Directors, shall be responsible for the collection of team fees and the purchase of year-end league awards. Member fees must be paid in full at or prior to the scheduling meeting.

**Section 4** All monies shall be kept in a recognized bank in the name of the WPISL. At all times there shall be two (2) Board of Directors (current Treasurer and one other current Board Member) authorized by the league to write checks and withdraw money. The process for a new Treasurer or board member to replace one of the board members currently authorized will require a form to be submitted to the recognized bank which is signed by the incoming member and both board members currently listed on the account.

**Section 5** Any officer may attend any committee meetings. The committee chair is still responsible for running the meeting.

**Section 6** Every committee shall have at least one member from the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS**

### **Section 1 Meetings**

- A. There shall be a minimum of two (2) regular meetings per year:
1. An annual organization meeting prior to June 1.
  2. A preseason meeting prior to September 1.
- B. Special meetings may be called by the President at any time. It is up to the President to schedule any special meetings and to determine the date of the meeting based upon allowing for adequate notification of all parties and balancing the need for an appropriate and prompt response based upon the issue at hand.
- C. Special meetings will also be scheduled in a timely fashion if requested by a majority of the Board of Directors.

### **Section 2 Voting**

- A. Each Member representative shall have one vote and only one vote. In order to vote, a member must be in good standing with the league, including having paid their membership dues at the last scheduling meeting.
- B. Votes shall be cast by Member's League Representative either in attendance at the meeting or by proxy. A Member's League Representative may assign someone else to vote in their absence if notification is done in writing prior to start of the meeting.
- C. Proxy votes include all votes by members not in attendance at the time of the vote.
  - 1. Votes by representatives not in attendance must be signed and submitted before the start of the meeting to become a proxy vote.
  - 2. If a voting member must leave a meeting early and communicates their vote (in writing) to the President (or chairperson of the meeting) their vote becomes a proxy vote.
- D. Quorum
  - 1. A majority of 50% + 1 of members shall constitute a quorum to vote on league matters. Exception: At the Annual Organization Meeting, if majority of 50% + 1 of members are not in attendance the election of officers shall still take place provided at least four Board Members and two other member representatives (not including any Board Members) are present and the Annual Organization Meeting was advertised on the league's web-site at least two weeks in advance of the Annual Organization Meeting.

**Section 3 Order of Business**

- A. Take attendance.
- B. Distribute and accept previous meeting minutes.
- C. Distribute the agenda for the meeting.
- D. Reports from the Board of Directors.
- E. Reports from the committees.
- F. Discuss unfinished business.
- G. Discuss new business.
- H. Adjournment.

**ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP FEES**

Each team will be required to pay an annual fee to cover the cost of league expenses. The Board of Directors shall set the amount of this fee with the approval by vote of a majority of 50% + 1 of the members in good standing. See By-Laws Rule 6.1 regarding forfeits due to non-payment of membership fees.

## **ARTICLE VI - ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT**

**Section 1** The control and management of this league comes from the Board of Directors.

**Section 2** Each member shall be allowed one vote and only one vote.

**Section 3** The Board of Directors shall administer all rules in accordance with ASA softball rules and the WPISL constitution, by-laws, and rules.

**Section 4** The Board of Directors shall establish the following standing committees at the organization meeting:

- A. Rules Committee.
- B. Scheduling Committee.
- C. Fundraising Committee
- D. Publicity Committee
- E. Umpire Committee

## **ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

**Section 1** The Constitution may be amended or changed with a 2/3 super majority vote (including proxy votes, in accordance with Article IV, Section 2) of members in attendance at a general membership meeting as long as the following occurs:

- A. Sufficient members present to have a quorum.
- B. Voting members must be in good standing.

**Section 2** A board member or any Member's League Representative currently in good standing may request to amend/repeal any part of the Constitution.

- A. A request may be made in writing by submitting it to the Board of Directors at least 30 days in advance of a general membership meeting for it to be placed on the agenda or
- B. A request may be made verbally by presenting the request during a general membership meeting. If a discussion is held on the motion, the Members may:
  - 1. Vote on the proposal as long as Section 1 above applies or



2. Table the Proposed Change – During the discussion, a board member or any Member’s League Representative in good standing may make a motion to table the request for the purpose of further research and discussion. If a majority 50% +1 vote to table the proposal, the proposed change automatically converts to a written proposal and follows the procedures for a written submittal in Section 2.A above.
- C. The President and/or Secretary shall publish to the membership any proposed Constitution amendment or change within 10 days of the request.

### **ARTICLE VIII - RULES OF ORDER**

*Robert's Rules of Order parliamentary procedures shall govern the conduct of all meetings.*

In circumstances where the constitution and/or bylaws conflict with Robert's Rules, the League By-Laws and/or Constitution supersede Robert's Rules.

# Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Softball League

## BY-LAWS

### **Rule 1 Team Membership/Eligibility**

1. Team membership shall be restricted to girls who have not reached their 19th birthday by June 30 immediately preceding the school year. See Rule 2.4 below for player eligibility for each level of competition within the WPISL.
2. Teams shall be selected from the student body. Girls must play for the school they attend. EXCEPTION: Teams may be selected from student body of one, two and up to three schools, should those schools enter a Cooperative Sponsorship as spelled out under Rule 12 below. All Cooperative Sponsorships require the approval of the WPISL Board of Directors. As required by Pennsylvania Law: Students that attend charter, cyber charter or who are home schooled are eligible to play for teams in the school district where they reside, provided their charter or cyber charter school does not have a team in the WPISL. Students who are home schooled are only eligible to play for the school where they are registered.
3. A member may enter only one Varsity team into the league each year. Student eligibility forms must be sent to the league office prior to the team's first contest.
4. Any student under suspension or expelled by her high school shall be ineligible to participate on the team for the duration of the suspension or expulsion.
5. A student deemed ineligible for extracurricular activities shall not be allowed to participate during the period of ineligibility.
6. Each school's administration shall be responsible for determining eligibility status of their players.

### **Rule 2 Roster**

1. Each head coach shall submit a roster containing each players first name, last name, uniform number, address, phone number, birth date, and school grade.
2. Rosters are due to the league scorekeeper prior to or at the scheduling meeting.
  - a. Varsity - Additions or revisions to varsity rosters shall be submitted to the Scorekeeper no later than the Monday following the second weekend of the

regular season. No additions or revisions to a team's varsity roster may be made after this point of the season and only those players listed on the varsity roster at this time will be eligible to participate in playoff games.

- b. Junior Varsity/Junior High - Additions or revisions to junior varsity and junior high rosters shall be submitted to the Scorekeeper as the season progresses. Only those players listed on the roster as of the Thursday prior to any weekend games are eligible to participate in that weekend's games.
3. The league scorekeeper will provide names, jersey numbers and school grade of each team member to all head coaches prior to the start of the 1st game. If there is a roster update, the scorekeeper will reissue the revised roster to the head coaches.
4. Roster for all member schools shall be as follows:
  - a. Varsity Roster: All 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders of a member team must be listed on the Varsity Roster. Seniors cannot play in junior varsity or junior high games. Only players listed on a member's Varsity Roster may play in a varsity game.
  - b. Junior Varsity Roster: All 8<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> graders of a member team must be listed on the Junior Varsity (JV) Roster. Only players listed on a member's JV Roster may play in a JV game.
  - c. Junior High Roster: All 7<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> graders of a member team must be listed on the Junior High. Only players listed on a member's Junior High Roster may play in a junior high game.

### **Rule 3 Supervision**

1. Each team shall be under the supervision of the head coach.
2. All coaches are encouraged to receive proper clearances prior to beginning any coaching activities.
  - a. If the coach has been a continuous resident of Pennsylvania for the past 10 years, the following clearance should be obtained:
    - Pennsylvania State Police Clearance
    - Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance
    - Signed "Volunteer Clearance Exception" statement
  - b. If the coach has NOT been a continuous resident of Pennsylvania for the past 10 years, the following should be obtained:

- Pennsylvania State Police Clearance
  - Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance
  - Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) report
- c. Coach clearances should be updated at least every 5 years in accordance with State requirements for volunteers.
3. Each head coach is responsible for supervising the conduct of their players, coaches, and fans.

**Rule 4 Score Keeping**

1. Each team shall designate a scorekeeper to keep score of each game including all playoff games.
2. Scorekeeper shall enter entire name and number of players eligible at the beginning of each game.
3. Each team scorekeeper shall consult with opponent's scorekeeper at the end of each inning to confirm scores, before a new inning can commence.
4. Scorekeeper shall have presiding umpire sign scorebook at the end of the game.
5. Both team's head coaches are responsible for faxing texting or emailing game results to the league scorekeeper within 48 hours of completion of the game.

**Rule 5 Postponements, Rainouts, and Make-ups**

1. Games must be played as scheduled at the scheduling meeting with the following exceptions:
  - a. Inclement weather or poor field conditions.
  - b. Mutually agreed upon by both head coaches.
  - c. Exception granted by the Board of Directors.
2. The league strongly encourages that teams make-up all games that are rained out.
  - a. Within 72 hours of the rainout the head coaches involved should have the game(s) re-scheduled and reported to the Scorekeeper. If a date cannot be reached within 72 hours, then each team shall submit within the next 48 hours to the President and Vice-President a list of three (3) alternative dates that their team is willing to play as both the host and visiting team. The President and Vice-President shall select from the lists when the game(s) will be rescheduled. Failure of the head coaches to schedule the game(s) or submit a list of

alternative dates to play the game(s) within the time frames established above may result in the WPISL Board of Directors declaring that one or both teams forfeit the game(s). Once the ruling is made, the WPISL President or Vice-President shall report to the Scorekeeper and the two head coaches the time, date, and field of the re-scheduled game(s). This rule does not apply to the last weekend of the regular season for Varsity teams when all games must be completed by the end of day Wednesday prior to the weekend of the scheduled start of that season's playoffs.

- b. Should the President's member team be involved with re-scheduling issues the Vice-President and Secretary shall select the date when the games(s) are re-scheduled. Should the President's and Vice-President's member teams be involved with re-scheduling issues then the duties of the decision for rescheduling the game falls to the Secretary, Treasurer, and Scorekeeper in that order.
3. For the case of a postponement: a team may contact the opposing head coach about postponing a scheduled game. The postponement request must be made no later than 48 hours before the scheduled game, except in the case of a rainout. The President and Scorekeeper should be notified within 48 hours of the request by both head coaches including an explanation for the postponement. The opposing head coach may: a) work with the requesting head coach to reschedule the game at a mutually agreed time, date and field or b) take the forfeit win(s). No team may request or be granted a postponement within 48 hours of the scheduled game. Upon agreement of the re-scheduled game, both head coaches shall notify the President and Scorekeeper by e-mail within 48 hours of the time/date/field for the game. At this point the game(s) is officially re-scheduled and the umpire should be notified by the host team. Should the re-scheduled game be rained out, postponed, or cancelled before the completion of the regular season for that level, the team making the original request will receive zero (0) points per game and the opposing team will receive three (3) points per game.

**Rule 6 Forfeits** (Forfeits will be declared for the following reasons)

1. Not paying league fees. Teams will continue to forfeit games until fees are paid.

2. Not submitting rosters to the Scorekeeper. Teams will continue to forfeit games until rosters are submitted.
3. Using an ineligible (declared by the league or their school) player during a game.
4. When any other appropriate violation occurs for which a protest is filed and upheld by the Board of Directors.
5. Postponement or cancellation of a scheduled game is made less than 48 hours prior to the scheduled start of the game, excluding weather conditions.
6. Either team does not have enough players to field a team.
7. Failure to adhere to the League's rescheduling rules.
8. Any school team forfeiting on more than one date that a game is scheduled during a season may be subject to disciplinary action by the Board of Directors.
9. In case of a forfeit, the team not at fault will be awarded a regular win and the team at fault will not receive any points.

**Rule 7 WPISL Standings and Playoffs/Championship (applies to Varsity teams only)**

1. Regular season points. A team will be awarded the following.
  - a. 3 points for a win, including a forfeit win.
  - b. 2 points for a tie for each team.
  - c. 1 point for a loss (not including forfeit loss).
  - d. 0 points for a forfeit loss.
2. Playoff Seeding:
  - a. Playoff home team will be the higher seeded team in each game.
  - b. Playoff seeding will be based on total number of points, not on won-loss record or winning percentage.

3. Playoff seeding tiebreakers are as follows:
  - a. Head-to-head (H2H)
    - i. Record – H2H
      - Games played must be equal (in case of 3-way+ tie), else skip to b.
    - ii. Runs Against – H2H
  - b. Common Opponents
    - i. Record – Games played must be equal, else skip to c.
    - ii. Runs Against – Common Opponents
  - c. Strength of Victory – Combined Winning % of all teams defeated
  - d. Overall Runs Against
  - e. Coin Flip
4. Tiebreaker notes:
  - a. A forfeit win will count as 3 points and a score of 7-0.
  - b. A forfeit loss will count for 0 points and a score of 0-7.
5. Umpires for the Varsity Playoffs:
  - a. There will be two umpires assigned to each game.
  - b. Prior to the start of each game, the umpires will designate a “head umpire” for the game and notify both teams.
6. Playoff supervisor - a WPISL Board Member (or designee) will be available at each playoff facility to help resolve any WPISL rule disputes. The WPISL Board Member (or designee) will only be involved if the umpire or a head coach of one of the teams involved with the game asks for clarification after first going through a resolution process with the umpire(s). See Rules Section 8 B.
7. WPISL Varsity teams must declare their intention to participate in the Playoffs by no later than the Sunday preceding the scheduled start of the WPISL Varsity Playoffs. The declaration shall be made by the Varsity Team’s Head Coach to the WPISL President and Secretary. Once the WPISL has received the declarations, the Scheduling Committee in cooperation with the playoff host organization will develop and publish the Playoff Brackets and Schedule. Once the Playoff Brackets and Schedule are published, Varsity teams have until Thursday at 11:59 PM to withdraw from the Playoffs without penalty. The withdrawal shall be made by the team’s Head Coach by notifying the WPISL President and Secretary. If a team

withdraws from the Playoffs prior to the deadline specified above, the Scheduling Committee in cooperation with the Playoff Host Organization will develop and publish a revised Playoff Brackets and Schedule. After the Thursday at 11:59 PM deadline, Varsity teams failing to attend, forfeiting, or otherwise not participating in Playoff games will receive the following penalty; during the subsequent season which the member fields a Varsity team, the Varsity Team will be scheduled for no more than one double-header where they serve as the host team at their home field. The Playoff Brackets and Schedule will not be revised if a Varsity team fails to attend, forfeits, or otherwise does not participate in Playoff games after the Thursday at 11:59 PM deadline. Should the Varsity Playoffs not be completed by Sunday of the first weekend the playoff are scheduled, the remaining teams will have until Monday preceding the next weekend of play to declare their intentions to continue participation in the playoffs or not. If the team declares not to participate, no penalty as described above will be enforced.

#### **Rule 8 Conduct of Members**

1. The following is not be permitted in and around the softball field, dugouts, and spectator areas during games:
  - a. Tobacco products
  - b. Vaping Products
  - c. Alcoholic beverages
  - d. Illegal drugs
  - e. Gambling

EXCEPTION: Raffles such as 50/50 are permitted if the team conducting the 50/50 has Small Games of Chance License.

This applies to all players, coaches, parents, and other spectators. Anyone who fails to adhere to these rules will be asked to leave immediately.

2. Unsportsmanlike conduct is defined as disruptive and disrespectful behavior at the softball field during a game and/or use of vulgar language or abuse of equipment or facilities. Such conduct is not permitted and shall bring immediate disqualification of that player. Fans not adhering to these rules will be asked to leave immediately. The Head Coach will be responsible for removing any ejected player, coach or fan for their team from the facility within a reasonable timeframe. Any player or coach



ejected from a contest must sit out the next contest. The WPISL has the right to suspend players or coaches for more than the one game minimum suspension.

3. No electronic devices are permitted during games, except cell phones which are permitted for use by coaches for emergency or urgent matters and electronic devices used by the scorekeeper or coach to keep score of the game.
4. The WPISL Code of Conduct governs all matters.

### **Rule 9 Uniforms**

1. All participants during regular season games and playoffs must wear uniforms consistent with ASA standards.
2. Coaches must instruct their players to dress in good taste.
3. Coaches must wear shoes. Open toe and/or heel shoes, sandals, flip-flops and the like are not permitted.
4. The WPISL encourages coaches to wear shirts and caps that match the school's team colors, name, nickname, and logos. The WPISL discourages the coaches from wearing shirts and caps with logos for non-school teams, businesses, and the like.

### **Rule 10 Schedule**

1. The scheduling committee will be responsible for arranging the league schedules.
2. The WPISL has adopted a first practice date that mirrors the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League (WPIAL) for WPIAL Fall Sports. The first practice date shall be the second Monday in August, unless otherwise specified by the WPIAL for that year. If the WPIAL first practice date in any given year is other than the second Monday in August, the WPISL will notify its members by no later than June 1 of that year.
3. The WPISL season for JV and Junior High teams ends at 10 pm on the first Sunday of November.

### **Rule 11 Conflict of Rules**

1. In the event of conflict of ASA rules and WPISL rules, the rules of the WPISL shall govern.

## **Rule 12 Cooperative Sponsorships**

### **1. Philosophy**

The philosophy that guides the WPISL Board of Directors in reviewing and approving applications for Cooperative Sponsorships between two to three schools is as follows:

- a. The Board supports opportunities to increase student participation.
- b. The Board encourages cooperative sponsorships that combine smaller schools rather than a small school combining with a larger school, except when the school lacks enough student-athletes interested in slow pitch softball to support the activity alone or is a member school in jeopardy of continuing its program due to lack of student-athlete interest.
- c. The Board will not approve agreements where an intent of the agreement is to improve the quality of a Team (i.e., obtain a better win/loss record).
- d. The Board will not approve agreements whereby:
  - i. Students enrolled at any of the schools entering into the agreement would be prohibited from participation in slow pitch softball by the agreement because of the location of their residence;
  - ii. The agreement would bar any home-schooled students who would be otherwise eligible at that school they are enrolled at as a home-school student from participating on the Team(s) covered by the agreement.
  - iii Combining numerous schools over a large geographical area.
- e. The school districts of the participating schools must be contiguous and/or overlap.

### **2. Provisions Applicable to all Agreements**

- a. School Enrollments will be determined by PIAA criteria as follows:
  - i. For cooperative sponsorships, the female enrollment, as of the date as of which schools report their enrollments to the Pennsylvania Department of Education in each odd-numbered year, in each of the schools but one in grades nine through eleven must be 300 students or less.
  - ii. The WPISL Board may waive the 300-female student or less requirement for the following:
    - For schools who have never participated in the WPISL.

- For schools who have operated as a cooperative sponsorship for five years or less.
  - For schools whose cooperative sponsorship members did not field a Varsity team in the previous WPISL season.
  - For schools whose cooperative sponsorship intends to operate at only the JV level, Junior High level, or both, but not at the Varsity level.
- b. Requests to Approve Agreements:
- i. Requests to approve a Cooperative Sponsorship must be submitted by the requesting schools to the WPISL President and Secretary by July 1 of the year in which the schools wish to compete. Following consideration, the WPISL President shall forward the request, together with his/her recommendation to the WPISL Board for its consideration pursuant to the Constitution and By Laws.
  - ii. Applications for agreements for WPISL Members who have achieved club sport status must include the approving resolution of the School Board or Athletic Director having jurisdiction over the schools. For all other schools, said requests for approval must include the proposed agreement between the participating schools where applicable. The resolution or agreement, as applicable, must fully delineate the terms and conditions that pertain to the Cooperative Sponsorship by the participating schools, including at least the following:
    - Introduction and purpose of agreement.
    - Timeline for implementation.
    - Duration of agreement.
    - Administrative responsibilities, liability, and insurance.
    - Team name and uniforms.
    - Financial arrangements.
    - Staffing.
    - Operating procedures.
    - Facilities.
- c. Modification or Termination of Agreements:

i. Procedure and Timing of Requests.

- Requests to continue, modify, or terminate a previously approved Cooperative Sponsorship agreement must be submitted by the requesting school to the WPISL President and Secretary by July 1st each year. Following consideration, the WPISL President shall forward the request, together with his/her recommendation, to the WPISL Board for consideration. The request must include a resolution of the School Board(s) and/or community supported Board(s) having jurisdiction over the schools approving such continuation, modification or termination.

ii. Grounds for Termination:

- Agreements may be terminated by the WPISL prior to the expiration under the following conditions:
  - Closing of one of the schools;
  - Substantiated complaints from WPISL members concerning recruiting by one of the participating schools;
  - Substantiated complaints from parents, School Boards, and/or students in one of the participating schools; and/or
  - Other valid reasons of abuse of the system as determined by the WPISL Board of Directors.

d. Agreements may be terminated by the WPISL Board upon request by all parties to the Agreement and the request is absent good cause for not doing so.

3. Effect of Termination of Cooperative Sponsorship of a Sport Agreement.

Any student whose own school does not sponsor a team and who was a member of a Team during the season that a Cooperative Sponsorship of a Sport Agreement was in place may, upon termination of such agreement, and with the consent of the Principals of the schools and community organization Board of Directors to the agreement, continue to participate on such Team as if said agreement remains in effect. Such student, however, is not eligible to participate on the other school's Team if the student's own school then sponsors a team.

As it is intended that this provision only permit a phase-out of a Cooperative Sponsorship Agreement without negative impact on those students who actually

participated under the agreement when it was in place, and not to allow additional participation, should this provision be deemed by any court to be violative of the rights of any other student by denying that student the opportunity to participate on a Team sponsored by another school, this provision shall be stricken in its entirety and, upon termination of any Cooperative Sponsorship Agreement, the students shall thereafter be permitted to participate in interscholastic slow pitch softball as if no Cooperative Sponsorship of a Sport Agreement had ever existed.

#### 4. Recognition of Team by School Districts

- a. The WPISL recognized members; whether recognized by their school district as a club sport or not, are often supported by community based programs. As such, members and potential members wanting to enter a cooperative sponsorship do not have to be recognized by the school districts to apply or be approved. Furthermore, members and potential members wanting to enter a cooperative sponsorship or continue as an approved cooperative sponsorship may continue to be supported by a community based organization. However, students participating on teams of an approved cooperative sponsorship must attend the schools participating in the cooperative sponsorship or students that attend charter, cyber charter or who are home schooled are eligible to play for teams in the school district where they reside, provided their charter or cyber charter school does not have a team in the in the WPISL. Students who are home schooled are only eligible to play for the school where they are registered.

#### **Rule 13 Amendments to the By-Laws**

1. The By-Laws may be amended or changed with a 2/3 super majority vote (including proxy votes in accordance with the WPISL Constitution, Article IV, Section 2) of members in attendance at a general membership meeting as long as the following occurs:
  - a. Sufficient members present to have a quorum.
  - b. Voting members must be in good standing.
2. A board member or any Member's League Representative currently in good standing may request to amend/repeal any part of the By-laws.

- a. A request may be made in writing by submitting it to the Board of Directors at least 30 days in advance of a general membership meeting for it to be placed on the agenda or
- b. A request may be made verbally by presenting the request during a general membership meeting. If a discussion is held on the motion, the Members may:
  - i) Vote on the proposal as long as Section 1 above applies or
  - ii) Table the Proposed Change – During the discussion, a board member or any Member’s League Representative in good standing may make a motion to table the request for the purpose of further research and discussion. If a majority 50% +1 vote to table the proposal, the proposed change automatically converts to a written proposal and follows the procedures for a written submittal in Section 2 A above.
- c. The President and/or Secretary shall publish to the membership any proposed By-Laws amendment or change within 10 days of the request.

# Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Softball League

## RULES

**PREAMBLE: All rules not covered herein shall revert to the current ASA rules.**

### **SECTION 1: GAME**

A. GAME LENGTHS: A regulation game shall consist of 7 innings. Regular season and tournament games are official games and the ten (10) run rule will be in effect after 5 full innings or 4 ½ if the home team is leading. The 10-run rule is in effect for regular season and tournament games. For playoff games, a 15-run rule is in effect after 5 full innings or 4 ½ if the home team is leading (opening round and quarterfinals). For playoff semi-final and championship games, no 10-run or 15-run rule ahead is in effect. EXCEPTION – For JV and Junior High make-up games, if both teams agree, make-up games may be 5 innings, provided the scheduled games are back-to-back double-headers. For these 5-inning games no run ahead rule is in effect.

1. Regular season games that are not official shall be replayed in their entirety.
2. Playoff and tournament games that are not official shall be resumed at the point where they are stopped. Should at least five innings have been played, the team trailing may elect to not finish the game without penalty.
3. Regular season and tournament games played on a school night – No inning of any game shall start after 10 pm.
4. Tournament games played on a non-school night – An inning of a game may start after 10 pm at the discretion of the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director shall be appointed by the WPISL President prior to the first game of the Tournament.
5. Playoffs – An inning of a game may start after 10 pm at the discretion of the WPISL Playoff supervisor (WPISL Board Member or designee) in charge for the playoff game.

B. JH RUN RULE

1. Max runs permitted per inning is 7, without continuation.
2. This rule is waived in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning for both teams.
3. This rule is waived (for trailing team only) in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> innings if the trailing team is in jeopardy of the 10-run rule above.
  - a. Under this scenario, the maximum number of runs the trailing team is permitted to score would result when a tie is attained.

C. TIE GAME:

1. Regular Season and play-in tournament games - If tied after 7 complete innings, the game will continue for up to two extra innings. If the game is still tied after the completion of the ninth inning, play shall stop and a tie-game shall be declared by the umpire.
2. Playoffs and Tournament Games elimination games - If tied after 7 complete innings, the game shall continue until a winner is determined.

D. LINEUP: Head coach has the discretion of using a continuous batting order or substitution. Exception: at the Junior High level a continuous batting lineup must be used, i.e., all roster players in the dugout must bat, unless the head coach states to the umpire and their opponent's head coach that an injured rostered player is in the dugout and that player will not participate in the game under any circumstances.

1. Continuous Batting - If a player arrives after the game has started, she may be inserted in the last position in the lineup.
2. Substitution - The head coach may use a substitute from his/her roster as needed.
3. A minimum of eight (8) players are required to start, continue play, and finish a game.
4. Only players listed on the team's roster, and coaches, are permitted in the dugout. No more than four coaches are permitted in the dugout and the scorekeeper is considered one of the four coaches, unless the scorekeeper keeps score from outside of the dugout.
5. A game day roster must be submitted to the opposing head coach and scorekeeper before each game. The game day roster may not contain



names of players who are not on the team's roster for that level submitted to the league's scorekeeper. The game day roster shall include the first and last names of players and their uniform numbers. The game shall not start until the scorekeeper and manager of each team has received from their opponent's game day roster. Late arriving players are not permitted to enter the game unless they have been listed on the game day roster prior to the game.

6. It is the responsibility of the head coach to make sure both the umpire and opposing team are aware of any substitutions (including a courtesy runner but excluding fielding positioning) prior to the start of the next play. A player will be deemed illegal if, prior to a second play occurring after the substitution, it is determined that the umpire and/or opposing team was not properly notified prior to the start of the first play and said illegal player involved in the substitution will be declared out. If the runner is illegal, she is out and the batter bats again. If the batter is illegal, runners go back to her original base and the batter is out.

E. WEATHER /FIELD CONDITIONS: Prior to the start of the game, all judgments regarding weather and field conditions are the responsibility of the Home Team Manager. After the game has started, all judgments regarding weather and field conditions are the responsibility of the umpires. In no event shall a game start or continue if there is lightning sighted or thunder heard. The umpires will determine if a game is to be stopped for rain conditions. If the game is stopped, both team managers and the umpires shall consult regarding continuation of the game. The umpires will have the final decision regarding continuation of play.

1. Playoffs – The umpires will discuss weather/field conditions with the coaches, the host team coordinator and the on-site board member before making a final determination on a final stoppage of play. This does NOT include a temporary stoppage.

F. PLAYING FIELD: BASES - 65-feet. The home team manager must consult with the umpire regarding ground rules. The umpire has the authority to

change a ground rule for safety reasons. The double-base shall be used at first base in accordance with ASA Rule 2, Section 3(H).

## **SECTION 2: FIELDING**

- A. DEFENSE: Each team may field up to ten (10) players on defense.
- B. INFIELD FLY RULE: The Infield Fly Rule IS in effect.
- C. DEFENSIVE CONFERENCES: Coaches are permitted 1 Defensive Conference per inning. If a coach exercises a 2nd Defensive Conference in the same inning, the pitcher will be removed and will not be eligible to pitch for the remainder of the game.

## **SECTION 3: PITCHING.**

- A. INNINGS PER GAME: There are no restrictions on the number of innings per game a pitcher can pitch.
- B. PITCHING DISTANCE:
  - 1. Varsity Pitching Distance is 50 feet.
  - 2. Junior Varsity Pitching Distance is 50 feet.
  - 3. Junior High Pitching Distance is 46 feet or 50 feet.
- C. DELIVERY OF A PITCH: The pitcher is prohibited to alter their pitching delivery by moving back and forth from pitching distances while pitching to the same batter. Whatever pitching distance is used for the 1st pitch will be used for all pitches to that batter.
- D. ARC OF A PITCH: The ball must be delivered with perceptible arc and reach a height of at least six (6) feet from the ground, while not exceeding a maximum of twelve (12) feet from the ground.
- E. ILLEGAL PITCH: If the arc of the pitch is not at least six (6) feet from the ground or has exceeded a height of twelve (12) feet from the ground, the umpire should call “Illegal Pitch” or “Illegal” using a voice that the batter and catcher can hear. It is not the responsibility or the intent of this rule for the umpire to call “Illegal Pitch” loud enough so other defensive and offensive players, coaches, or fans can hear.
- F. SAFETY EQUIPMENT FOR PITCHER:
  - 1. FACE SHIELD – Every pitcher is required to wear a protective face shield while she is pitching. This rule is in effect for all levels of the WPISL.

2. HEART PROTECTOR - Every pitcher is required to wear a heart protector while she is pitching. This rule is in effect for all levels of the WPISL.

#### **SECTION 4: BATTER / BASE RUNNER**

- A. OFFENSIVE CONFERENCES: Coaches are permitted one (1) Offensive Conference per inning. If a coach exercises 2nd Offensive Conference in the same inning, the batter will be declared out.
- B. COURTESY AND SUBSTITUTE RUNNERS: Courtesy runners are permitted if using a continuous line-up. Courtesy runners are NOT permitted if using a substitute line-up.
  1. Prior to the game, the head coach must meet with the umpire and the opposing head coach and identify players who will need a courtesy runner. Those players who need a courtesy runner must be identified by each team's scorekeeper in the line-up card. Once a player is identified to need a courtesy runner, a courtesy runner must be used for that player throughout the game. Courtesy runners are to be used due to injuries or ailments and not to gain an advantage over the opposing team.
  2. A player who is identified in the line-up card that needs a courtesy runner may not advance beyond first base on any hit ball except for a homerun over the fence or a batted fair ball that bounced over a fence or a painted line or other marker identified and is considered out of play based on the ground rules review with the umpire prior to the game. Exception: the player identified in the line-up card that needs a courtesy runner may advance to second base, but no further, on a dead-ball overthrow that goes out of play.
  3. The courtesy runner shall be the last out. If no out has been recorded in the game; the courtesy runner shall be the last player listed in the line-up. If the courtesy runner is still on base when it is her turn to bat, she shall be replaced with another courtesy runner who was the last out, next to last out, third to last out, etc.

A substitute runner is permitted for a player who becomes injured while running the bases. Whether a player has been injured and a substitute runner

is needed is at the discretion of the umpire (or the head umpire if two umpires are being used in the game). A substitute runner is permitted whether a team is using a continuous or substitute batting line-up.

1. If a continuous line-up is being used and the injured player is not capable taking her next turn at bat, Rule (C) below applies. If the injured player is capable of batting, but not capable of baserunning, a courtesy runner is permitted provided it is identified to the umpire, opposing head coach and added to the line-up card of each team prior to the next at-bat for that player.
2. If a substitution line-up is being used and the injured player is not capable taking her next turn at bat or baserunning she must be substituted for in the line-up, i.e., no courtesy runner is permitted. If no substitutes are available, a team may play shorthanded, however, if a team does not have a minimum of eight players the game shall not continue.

C. FAILURE TO TAKE A TURN AT BAT: When a Varsity team is using a continuous line-up and a player does not take her turn at bat, “for whatever reason”, an out will be recorded. The line-up will close and no additional outs will be recorded. The player may return and bat in the same position in the line-up; if the returning player again does not bat, an out will be recorded and the line-up will close. When a JV team or Junior High Team is using a continuous line-up and a player must leave early and if the opposing coach and umpire is notified prior to the start of the game, no out will be recorded.

D. THROWN BAT. This WPISL Rule supersedes ASA Supplement Rule #52.

1. When a player throws a bat intentionally in anger, the player shall be ejected.
2. The batter must maintain control of the bat. Upon making contact with the ball or swinging at the ball, the batter may release the bat. The release of the bat must be in a controlled manner that does not make contact with any player, umpire, coach, fan, backstop, fence, or land in the dugout area. Should the bat make contact with a player, umpire, coach, backstop, fence or land in the dugout area, it shall be the umpire who determines if the bat was released in an uncontrolled manner. If the bat, in the umpire’s

opinion was released in an uncontrolled manner, the batter shall be declared out by the umpire. If the ball is put in play during a release of the bat in an uncontrolled manner, the umpire shall rule the play dead. All baserunners shall return to the base occupied prior to play. Should the same player release a bat, in the opinion of the umpire, in an uncontrolled manner for a second time in the same game, the player shall be ejected.

3. Should the bat be released in a controlled manner (in the opinion of the umpire) but prevents the defense from making a play on the ball then interference should be ruled.
4. Should the player use a bat to prevent a defensive player from making a play, interference should be ruled.
5. The bat must be released before the batter reaches any base.

#### **SECTION 5: LEADING AND BASE STEALING**

- A. ASA Rule 8, Section 7, Item R. is not applicable. The base runner is out when in the opinion of the umpire the runner fails to keep contact with the base to which they are entitled until the pitched ball is batted, touches the plate, ground, catcher or umpire. EFFECT: If a baserunner steps off the base for whatever reason and the batter swings and misses the pitch the baserunner shall be declared out.

#### **SECTION 6: HELMET RULE: “Managers must enforce this rule for the safety of the players”**

- A. BATTER/BASE RUNNER: Each batter and base runner must wear an approved batting helmet. The helmet must be worn securely while at bat and while running the bases. The helmet must be kept on until the player is inside the dugout area.
- B. PLAYER EJECTION: Refusal to wear a helmet shall result in the player being ejected from the game. The player shall be declared out. The player shall be removed from the lineup, the line-up closes, and the batting order shall continue. The ejected player’s batting position will be skipped for the remainder of the game.
- C. PLAYER RECORDED OUT: If, while running the bases, the helmet comes off any base runner’s head or any base runner removes the helmet prior to leaving the field of play, the offending base runner will be called out, play will

be stopped at the first opportunity and all remaining base runners will be assigned the nearest base. If a player is called out and removes their helmet the player can be ejected but a second out cannot be called against that player.

D. STOPPING OF PLAY: If a player's helmet becomes dislodged during a slide or due to contact with a defensive player, the player will not be called out. Time will be called and play will be stopped at the first opportunity. All base runners will be awarded the base they were closest to at the time the play is stopped. The intent of the rule is to protect the players from accident or injury from thrown balls.

### SECTION 7: EQUIPMENT

A. SOFTBALLS: For Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Junior High games the home team shall provide two (2) new WPISL approved 11-inch softballs having a 0.52 polycore, 300 compression ratio, and optic green color with red stitching. A WPISL approved ball meeting the specifications stated above must be used throughout the Varsity and Junior Varsity game. The "approved" ball for each season will be determined by the Board of Directors at least 2 weeks in advance of the scheduling meeting.

B. BATS: In order for a bat to be used during a WPISL game, it must have at least one of the following stamps:

1.



All Games



Adult Fast Pitch/All Slow Pitch

2. Not be on the “Non-approved ASA bat list”. See link below  
[http://www.asasoftball.com/about/build\\_batlist\\_one\\_page.asp](http://www.asasoftball.com/about/build_batlist_one_page.asp)
  3. Bat rings are NOT permitted.
  4. Altering bats is prohibited. Approved bats shall be considered altered if they are rolled, shaved, repainted, weighted or modified to change the characteristics from that produced by the manufacturer. If a bat used in a WPISL game is deemed to be illegally “altered”, then rule 6 below shall apply.
  5. Warming of any bats is NOT permitted prior to or during games. This includes, but is not limited to, bat warmers, blankets, fire, heaters, taking them to cars, dugouts with heaters, shelters and any other means of warming a bat. Bats are to remain near the batting cage for the duration of each game. If a bat used in a WPISL game is deemed to be illegally “warmed”, then rule 6 below shall apply.
  6. If a coach challenges a player’s bat after she has used it during a game and the bat is deemed to be non-complying with items 1, 2, 4 or 5 above:
    - (i) the inning immediately comes to an end for the offensive team;
    - (ii) all runs scored up to that point of the game will be erased for the team of the player who used the non-approved/altered/warmed bat; and
    - (iii) the player and head coach are ejected for the game, which includes an automatic minimum suspension for the next game.
- C. CATCHERS EQUIPMENT: Catchers must wear NOCSAE approved helmet with a facemask and attached throat protector or built-in throat protector and chest protector. Shin guards are optional.
- D. HELMET: NOCSAE approved batting helmets are required; NOCSAE approved face guards and chinstraps are optional but recommended.
- E. UNIFORMS: Team players are to wear their issued uniform and must also wear a numbered jersey. Additional appropriate clothing is permitted and encouraged during cold weather.
- F. SHOES: Metal spikes of any kind are not permitted. The umpire shall check the player’s shoes prior to each game.

- G. JEWELRY: No jewelry is permitted except medic alert bracelets. Coaches that have players with medic alert bracelets should notify the umpires prior to the start of the contest. Uniform numbers of those wearing medic alert bracelets should be provided to the umpire.

## **SECTION 8: UMPIRES AND COACHES**

- A. UMPIRE ASSIGNMENTS: The umpire is the representative of a Member organization by which they have been assigned to a particular game. All games and scrimmages shall be officiated by an umpire as defined above. Varsity Playoffs games shall be officiated by umpires selected by the Board.
- B. PAYMENT OF UMPIRE: For regular season games, scheduled as double headers, the host team shall pay for the umpire services for both games. For regular season games, scheduled at single games, the host team shall pay for the umpire services.
- C. DISPUTES AND INQUIRIES:
1. As per the PIAA, all umpire decisions are final. There are no protests in Pennsylvania. Game results are final.
  2. During a game, in order for the head coach to question an umpire's decision of a WPISL rule, it is mandatory for that coach to present a hard copy of the most recent version of the WPISL rules.
  3. Member League Representatives may formally request an inquiry of an umpire's decision of a WPISL ruling. This request is NOT to change the game decision but to determine if any action should be taken upon said umpire.
- D. UMPIRES AND COACHES: The umpire and coaches are adults charged with the responsibility of seeing that the participants play the game fairly and safely. Umpires and coaches are partners in this effort, not adversaries.

## **SECTION 9: BANNED SUBSTANCES**

- A. No alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, tobacco or vaping products of any kind are to be used during the game by anyone in attendance.

## **SECTION 10: AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES**



- A. The Rules may be amended or changed with a 50% +1 majority vote (including proxy votes in accordance with the WPISL Constitution, Article IV, Section 2) of members in attendance at a general membership meeting as long as the following occurs:
  - 1. Sufficient members present to have a quorum.
  - 2. Voting members must be in good standing.
- B. A board member or any Member's League Representative currently in good standing may request to amend/repeal any part of the Rules.
  - 1. A request may be made in writing by submitting it to the Board of Directors at least 30 days in advance of a general membership meeting for it to be placed on the agenda or
  - 2. A request may be made verbally by presenting the request during a general membership meeting. If a discussion is held on the motion, the Members may:
    - i) Vote on the proposal as long as Section 1 above applies or
    - ii) Table the Proposed Change – During the discussion, a board member or any Member's League Representative in good standing may make a motion to table the request for the purpose of further research and discussion. If a majority 50% +1 vote to table the proposal, the proposed change automatically converts to a written proposal and follows the procedures for a written submittal in Section 2 A above.
  - 3. The President and/or Secretary shall publish to the membership any proposed Rules amendment or change within 10 days of the request.