

GREATER EDMONTON MINOR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION



GEMSA CALENDAR

Date	Time	Event
April 25, 2023,	7:00 PM	Coaches Meeting
May 1, 2023,		Opening Day
June 23, 2023,		Finals Opening Day

GREATER EDMONTON MINOR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

President	Shelby Spencer
Vice President	Mike Wells
Secretary	Natasha Rychlik
Treasurer	Colleen Allison
Registrar	Julie Robicheau
Commissioner	Greg Clark
Scheduler	Ryan Dutka

UMPIRES

Umpire-in-Chief –	Brent Tyson (EBC)
Umpire-in-Chief –	Gerald Tomko (BRUA)

www.gemsa.ca

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GEMSA POLICIES

DIAMOND CONDITIONS / CONCERNS

GEMSA plays on various diamonds throughout the region, and it is impossible for league officials to visit them regularly to report maintenance or safety concerns to the appropriate association.

We ask that coaches walk the diamonds before games or practices and report concerns directly to the association responsible for the diamonds. Contacts and links can be found on the GEMSA website.

If a diamond has a significant safety concern, or if a maintenance issue remains unresolved for an extended period, please notify the GEMSA by e-mailing details and photos of the issue to President@gemsa.ca

DIAMOND CLOSURE INFORMATION

GEMSA does not have access to any rainout or diamond closure information that is not publicly available and does not get advanced notice from cities regarding the closure or possible closure of diamonds.

DO NOT contact GEMSA regarding possible closures due to weather. If unsure about diamond closures due to weather, coaches are required to contact the field closure information line directly.

All available Rainout Lines are listed on the GEMSA website. Rain out link - [GEMSA - Rainout Link](#) *Please remember that weather in Alberta may move quickly. It is very possible to have good weather conditions by game time even if it is raining in the late afternoon. In these variable situations, please ensure you always check the rainout line to see if the diamonds are officially closed.*

LIGHTNING POLICY

When considering lightning safety, GEMSA uses the 30/30 rule. When lightning is observed, play stops and the time between the lightning and thunder is counted. When you count 30 seconds or fewer between lightning and thunder, leave the field, take shelter immediately and remain sheltered for 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder.

GEMSA EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION POLICY

DEFINITIONS - The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

- a. *“Members”* - All categories of membership defined by the Greater Edmonton Minor Softball Association, as well as all individuals engaged in activities with the Greater Edmonton Minor Softball Association including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, parents/guardians, umpires, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members and Directors and Officers of the Greater Edmonton Minor Softball Association.
- b. *Under-Represented Groups* – Under-Represented Groups include women, people from lower income families, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, newcomers to Canada, members of the LGBTQ community, people of any faith and any other group or person deemed as Under-Represented by the Greater Edmonton Minor Softball Association executive committee.
- c. *GEMSA* – means the Greater Edmonton Minor Softball Association.

PURPOSE – GEMSA is committed to encouraging inclusion, equality and access in its administration, policies, programs, and activities. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the GEMSA provides its members with a full and equitable range of opportunities to participate and lead.

PROCEDURES - GEMSA will enhance the quality of and increase the level of participation in GEMSA’s leadership and programs by:

- a. Supporting inclusion, equality, and access for under-represented groups
- b. Ensuring that the achievement of equitable opportunities is a key consideration when developing, updating, or delivering GEMSA’s programs and policies
- c. Ensuring that individuals from under-represented groups have no barriers to participation in GEMSA’s programs.
- d. Dealing with any incidence of discriminatory behaviour according to GEMSA’s Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy.

DECISION-MAKING - GEMSA will encourage balanced representation by under-represented groups on its Board and on all committees.

ONGOING COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY - GEMSA understands that one key to being a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable organization is to incorporate equity principles in all strategies, plans and actions of the organization, whether they relate to technical programs, operations, business management, sponsorship, marketing, media, or communications. GEMSA resolves to incorporate equity concerns in its own strategies, plans, actions, and operations on a continuing basis.

EVALUATION - GEMSA will continually monitor and evaluate its inclusion, equality, and access progress.

GEMSA CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS POLICY

All officials, coaches, players, parents/guardians, and spectators who participate in GEMSA are automatically bound by and must adhere to the following Code of Conduct.

All coaches “on the bench” will be required to complete the online course: “Respect in Sport for Activity Leaders” as per Softball Alberta Coaches requirements.

1. COACHES

- a. I will not disrespect another coach, player, parent, spectator, umpire, or league official with the intent of humiliation, defamation, slander, ill will or intent to harm emotionally, socially, physically, verbally or conspire to hurt, isolate or target individuals, or impede a respectful and positive environment.
- b. I will settle disagreements with others in a confidential and private manner after games or practices.
- c. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for everyone participating in GEMSA at every game, practice, or event.
- d. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of all players on all teams ahead of any personal desire to win.
- e. I will ensure my players are aware of the Player Code of Conduct.
- f. I will ensure my team’s family members and spectators are aware of the Spectator Code of Conduct
- g. I will ensure, to the best of my ability, that my players are in a safe and healthy environment.
- h. I will insist that my players are in a safe and healthy environment.
- i. I will remember that I am here for children and not for the adults.
- j. I will do all I can to make the game fun and safe for all the children involved.

I, as a coach in GEMSA, understand that failure to abide by the Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy may result in game ejection, league suspension and/or game forfeiture.

2. SPECTATORS

- a. I will remember that the children are playing for their enjoyment, not mine.
- b. I will encourage players to play by the rules.
- c. I will encourage players to respect the coaches, their team-mates, umpires, and officials.
- d. I will not disrespect another coach, player, parent, spectator, umpire, or league official with the intent of humiliation, defamation, slander, ill will or intent to harm emotionally, socially, physically, verbally or conspire to hurt, isolate or target individuals, or impede a respectful and positive environment.

- e. I will settle disagreements with others in a confidential and private manner after games or practices.
- f. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of all players on all teams ahead of any personal desire to see my team win.
- g. I will do my best to be supportive and involved without interfering with the operation of the team.
- h. I understand that the game of softball is difficult to learn and play and that some of the rules of the game or coaching styles may have changed since I was last involved in the sport.
- i. I understand that the goals of playing softball are to have fun, develop player skills and create team spirit.

I, as a Spectator understand that by not abiding by the guidelines of this Code of Conduct or by displaying any other inappropriate conduct, will result in my being asked to leave the ballpark or league suspension for the team I am supporting and may result in a game forfeiture.

3. PLAYERS

- a. I will not disrespect another player, coach, parent, spectator, umpire, or league official with the intent of humiliation, defamation, slander, ill will or intent to harm emotionally, socially, physically, verbally or conspire to hurt, isolate or target individuals, or impede a respectful and positive environment.
- b. I will settle disagreements with others in a confidential and private manner after games or practices.
- c. I will not fault other players when mistakes occur.
- d. I will always listen to and look at a coach, umpire or official while they are talking.
- e. I will always be in control of my temper.
- f. I understand that swearing, throwing equipment or any other actions that detract from the game will result in immediate ejection or removal from the game and possible suspension.
- g. I will take pride in myself and everything I do on the ball field.
- h. I will lead by being an example for my teammates.
- i. I will play by the rules.

I, as a Player understand that by not abiding by the guidelines of this Code of Conduct or by displaying any other inappropriate conduct, will result in my being asked to leave the ballpark or league suspension for the team I am playing for and may result in a game forfeiture.

CONFIDENTIALTY AND PRIVACY POLICY

PURPOSE – The purpose of this policy is to ensure the protection of Confidential Information that is proprietary to GEMSA by making all GEMSA Members aware that there is an expectation to always act appropriately and consistently with this policy.

APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY – This policy applies to all categories of membership within GEMSA, as well as all individuals employed by or engaged in activities with GEMSA, including but not limited to, directors, committee members, athletes, coaches, umpires, contracted parties, volunteers, officers, managers, and administrators (hereinafter “GEMSA Representatives”).

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – The term “Confidential Information” includes, but it not limited to the following.

- a. Personal Information of GEMSA Members and Representatives, including but not limited to, name, address, e-mail, telephone number, cell phone number, date of birth and financial information.
- b. Written concerns or placement requests raised with the GEMSA board. The requesting parties shall have a reasonable expectation of privacy regarding their concerns.
- c. Financial information collected.
- d. GEMSA intellectual property and proprietary information related to the programs, fundraisers, business, or affairs of GEMSA, including, but not limited to, procedures, business methods, forms, policies, business, marketing and development plans, advertising programs, creative materials, trade secrets, knowledge, techniques, data, products, technology, computer programs, manuals, software, financial information, and information that is not generally or publicly known and distributed.

RESPONSIBILITIES - GEMSA Representatives will not, either during the period of their involvement/employment or any time, thereafter, disclose to any person or organization any Confidential Information acquired during their period of involvement/employment. Confidential Information shall only be released if expressly authorized to do so by the affected person(s) or, in case of a minor, by their parent or legal guardian. All files and written materials relating to Confidential Information of GEMSA will remain the property of GEMSA.

HARASSMENT AND ABUSE POLICY

When a young person is harassed or abused, the impact can be devastating. A major hurdle to healing the wounds that inevitably result, is non-disclosure; to recover, victims must be heard and believed.

GEMSA believes that any softball player, umpire, coach, or manager should have the ability to discuss any concerns that might be classified as harassment, and we are available to talk to your request. All conversations and information will be kept private, as per the Confidentiality and Privacy Policy.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

DEFINITION - “Social media” is a term meaning all computer-mediated communication media such as blogs, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.

GEMSA is aware that interaction and communication occurs frequently on social media and cautions that any of the following conduct or behaviour will be subject to disciplinary action and that removing or deleting content from Social Media after it has been posted either publicly or privately does not negate the action and will still be subject to discipline.

- a.** Creating or contributing to any social media, text-message, or email of disparaging, harmful, disrespectful, hateful, insulting, or otherwise negative comments on any social media that is directed at any person connected with GEMSA and related events.
- b.** Creating or contributing to any social media, text-message, or email of a disparaging, harmful, disrespectful, hateful, insulting, or otherwise negative picture, altered picture, or video on any social media that is directed at any person connected with GEMSA and related events.
- c.** Creating or contributing to any social media, text-message, or email directed at any person connected with GEMSA that include but are not limited to insults, negative comments, inappropriate pranks or jokes, threats, posing as another person, spreading rumours or lies, or illegal or other harmful behaviours.

GEMSA BOARD OPERATING RULES

Rules listed will be prefaced with the following, P – R – A, as explained below.

1. PLAYING RULES (P)

- a.** Playing rules, as specified in the GEMSA Official Handbook, may be changed by the GEMSA Board of Directors for the next playing season, at any meeting.
- b.** Playing rules may be amended or changed by the GEMSA Board of Directors to follow rule changes by Softball Alberta or Softball Canada at any time.

2. REGISTRATION RULES (R)

- a.** Registration rules, as specified in the GEMSA Official Handbook, may be changed by the GEMSA Board of Directors for the next playing season, at any meeting.
- b.** Registration rules may be amended or changed by the GEMSA Board of Directors to follow rule changes by Softball Alberta or Softball Canada at any time.

3. ADMINISTRATION RULES (A)

- a.** Administration rules may be changed by the GEMSA Board of Directors at any meeting.

GEMSA OPERATING RULES

DEFINITIONS (A)

- 1) **CATEGORY:** Refers to the age group (U9, U11, U13, U15, U17, U19).
- 2) **DIVISION:** Refers to a tier within a category, as follows:
 - a. **“C/D”** – (Recreation ball) is based on GEMSA rules of play. The maximum number of players on a roster is capped at 17 and the minimum at 8 per team (without being penalized for having an “out” at bat). This league is for teams that are less competitive and is for all categories.
 - b. **U9** The maximum number of players on a roster is capped at 10 and the minimum at 6 per team. For rosters with more than 10 players, permission must be granted by the GEMSA Board, prior to the start of the playing season.
 - c. **“B”** – (Competitive ball) is based on GEMSA rules of play. The maximum number of players on a roster is capped at 17 and the minimum at 8 per team (without being penalized for having an “out” at bat). This league is for teams that are more competitive than Recreation League and is for all categories.
 - d. **“A”** - (Competitive ball) is based on the rules of Softball Canada (Softball Canada substitution at U13, unlimited substitution at U11), with the maximum number of players being capped at 17 and the minimum at 9 per team. This league is for teams that are competitive and is for U11 to U19 categories.
- 3) **TIERING:** Refers to a system where a minimum of 7 teams in a category will be placed into divisions of equal calibre. Tiering at the beginning of the season, shall be decided by the GEMSA Board selecting the division where they feel a team is best suited. Any such re-tiering will be done by the GEMSA Board of Directors, tiering may (may not occur) realign existing A, B, C/D divisions, re-tiering into new divisions. Standings will revert to zero for all teams after the re-tiering. Any team can appeal their tiering in writing to their respective category director within 24 hours after the tiering has been completed with a \$250.00 bond accompanying the appeal.

GEMSA REGISTRATION RULES

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

1. ELIGIBLE PLAYER

- a. One who is registered on a team that has been approved by GEMSA.
- b. Has provided proper proof of age to Softball Alberta or GEMSA upon request. Acceptable proof of age will be one of the following, provided it shows the player's name and date of birth and has not been altered. A photocopy of one of these documents is recommended:
 - Birth Certificate
 - Baptismal Certificate
 - Passport
 - Alberta Health Care Card of Health Care Status
 - School letter on Letterhead paper
- c. The Registrar will shred all proof of birth documentation once verified.

2. PLAYER TRANSFERS

- a. Are administered by Softball Alberta, based on the following policy:

ALL players, U15 and under who wish to register on a team outside their own local association for the softball season must apply each year for a Player Transfer. This Player Transfer will be accepted by Softball Alberta subject to the release of the player from their home association only. If you have any questions regarding this form, please contact your District Organizer.
- c. It is each team's responsibility to ensure that all players on their roster who require a transfer have received one.
- d. Any team rostering a player that was required to, but did not follow the player transfer process, shall have all league games forfeited, and the registering association may be subject to suspension from the league.

3. INELIGIBLE PLAYER

- a. One who has been suspended.
- b. One who does not supply proper proof of age, if requested.
- c. Ruled Ineligible by Softball Alberta or Softball Canada
- d. One who is declared ineligible by the GEMSA registrar and GEMSA Board of Directors.

EFFECT: Any team playing ineligible players shall have all games forfeited where such player participated.

TEAM PLAYER REGISTRATION

1. Each team may register a maximum 17 players.
2. Each team must register a minimum of 8 players (B, and C/D), as per GEMSA rules, and a minimum of 9 players (A), as per SOFTBALL ALBERTA rules.
 - a. **EXCEPTION** – as per operation rules **U9** must register a minimum of 6 players and a maximum of 10 players. For rosters with more than 10 players, permission must be granted by the GEMSA Board, prior to the start of the playing season.
 - b. **SPECIAL NOTE** - Teams may play only players who are registered on their player registration form for the current playing year. Pick up players are allowed from within their own association as explained under the players section – see page 18.

EFFECT - This situation will be brought to GEMSA for disciplinary action.

3. Players may only be registered on one team during the year. Over age players are allowed from within each association as explained under the players section – see page 19.

January 1 st of Current Year	
Category	Years of Birth
U19	2004-2005
U17	2006-2007
U15	2008-2009
U13	2010-2011
U11	2012-2013
U9	2014-2015

4. Team registration **MUST** be completed online no later than May 15th of the current year.

EFFECT 1 - Incomplete information on the player: player is ineligible for the remainder of the season and GEMSA playoffs.

EFFECT 2 - If team/player registration is not handed in by the deadline, the team is ineligible for the remainder of the season and GEMSA finals.
5. The registrar will allow forty-eight (48) hours for errors to be corrected, after contacting the coach indicated on the form.
6. Team registration will not be accepted for a team who has a past due balance or has been deemed ineligible by the GEMSA Board of Directors.
7. After May 1st of the current year, a player registered on any team who decides to leave that team, can only be picked up on another team with the approval of the GEMSA Registrar.

8. In extenuating circumstances (such as injuries or players moving away), the GEMSA Registrar could allow two additional players to the team registration, upon approval of GEMSA Board Directors. Each situation will be handled on its own merit.

TEAM MANAGEMENT

1. (A) - Each team must have on their player's bench responsible people to coach, manage, look after, and take responsibility for the team BEFORE, DURING and AFTER the game.
2. (A) - The signature of the coach must appear on the Line Up Card, prior to the start of the game.
3. (P) - The action of the team spectators, players, team officials and league officials must be honourable. See Policies – Codes of Conduct on pages 6 and 7.
4. (P) - ALCOHOL / TOBACCO / DRUGS / VAPING: No consumption of alcohol, tobacco, drugs (including marijuana) or vaping of any kind shall be allowed on the spectator bleachers, players benches, in the dugouts or anywhere within 10 meters of the playing field before, during or following games, practices or other team events.

EFFECT - Of A, B, C & D: Failure to comply may result in ejection, forfeiture of the game and/or suspension.

5. (P) - Suspension(s)/Ejection(s)
 - a. A coach, player, manager, or team member ejected from a game will receive an automatic one game suspension for the first offence. The Umpire responsible for the ejection, will follow accepted Zone and Provincial procedures for reporting ejections which includes an immediate notification to their Zone UIC after the game; who then in turn, will be responsible for notifying the GEMSA Commissioner.
 - b. Suspension will apply to the next GEMSA game played (league or playoff).
 - c. For the second offence, the ejected person will appear before the GEMSA Commissioner and his/her committee, and the penalty could be a suspension for the balance of the season.
 - d. Any player that is declared ineligible for further participation in the game as an infraction of the rules, will be removed from the game. The player or coach may remain on the bench.

NOTE - An individual may not participate in any game(s) while under suspension and is not allowed on the playing field or within the Ball Park.

EXCEPTION - If the ejection is due to a violation of the playing rules, (i.e. illegal re-entry Softball Canada, Rule 3.1.9), there will be no additional suspension.

6. (P) - All spectators must be a reasonable distance from the players' benches (REASONABLE DISTANCE shall be in the plate umpire's judgment).

IMPORTANT NOTE

The actions and conduct of a team's spectators are the responsibility of the team's head coach or acting head coach. Refer to Code of Conduct Policy on pages 6 and 7

EFFECT - If spectators cannot be controlled after one warning, which will be issued to the head coach or acting head coach and which will constitute a bench warning, the game will be suspended, and an umpire protest lodged with zone officials.

LINE UP CARDS

- a. (A) - Line up cards are required for each game.
- b. (P) - Line up cards must show date, team name and players' first/last names and uniform numbers.
- c. Winning teams shall submit the game scores online **within 24 hours** following the end of each game.

EFFECT - Failure of a team to comply with A, B or C above could result in forfeiture.

SCORE SHEET

- a. (A) - All scores are to be submitted on line by the winning team thru RAMP within 24 hours of each game, in the event of a tie, the Home team is responsible for reporting the score.
- b. (A) - The winning team shall have the umpire sign (if a certified umpire) on the winning score sheet. An image of this scoresheet must be kept by the winning team's head coach and made available for inspection until July 31st, of the current playing season.

EXCEPTION - In the event of a tie game, the HOME team shall retain the original score sheet as required.

- c. (A) - All score sheets shall include team name, division (C/D, B, A), category, date and field location, first and last names of players.
- d. (A) - For any ejections or protests, an image of the score sheet with the notation of the incident from the umpire and/or coach must be e-mailed to commissioner@gemsa.ca **immediately** following the game. The GEMSA Commissioner **must be contacted by telephone immediately** following the game, and the **original score sheet** must be submitted **within 24 hours** by the Home team with the notation on their score sheet.

GEMSA PLAYING RULES - GENERAL

These rules may include any additions or changes to Softball Canada Playing Rules for All Categories. Online rulebooks can be found at: <https://softball.ca/resources/library>

Be informed. Read your Softball Canada Rule Book in conjunction with the GEMSA Handbook. There are some important changes to wording, clarification and/or new rules. It is your responsibility to keep up to date.

1. EQUIPMENT

- a. **BASES** - Home team will supply a pitching plate with proper pins and pegs, bases with proper pins or pegs and two playable (same brand) softballs. The double base is a required item of equipment.
- b. **UNIFORMS**
 - Teams are encouraged to wear matching uniforms.
 - Sliding Pants or Pads: Players may wear a uniform with a solid color pair of sliding pants or pads. It is not mandatory that all players wear sliding pants or pads. No player may wear ragged, frayed, or slit legs on exposed sliding pants or pads.

EFFECT - The umpire will direct that the player(s) gets properly dressed. Sufficient time will be given to comply. Failure to comply promptly (without undue delay of game), will mean that the player(s) in violation will not be allowed to participate in the game

- c. **HELMETS** - Helmets are mandatory for all divisions, with a minimum of five (5) helmets required per team. All categories covered by GEMSA must wear a batting helmet, complete with 2 earflaps, chin strap and a face-cage guard.

NOTE - Cracked helmets are illegal.

EFFECT 1 - A batter entering the batter's box without a helmet shall be immediately called out.

EFFECT 2 - If, in the umpire's judgment, a helmet is intentionally removed, interference shall be called. The player whose helmet was removed shall be called out.

EFFECT 3 - On deck batters, minor-aged coaches and bat persons will be removed from the game after a warning, if not wearing a helmet.

EFFECT 4 - Batters or batter-runners that have been called out must not remove their batting helmet until they have reached the dugout or bench. Any player doing so will be removed from the game. No warning will be issued by the umpire.

- d. **INFIELDER MASKS** - Infielder Masks are mandatory for all divisions, with a minimum of five (5) masks required per team. Infielder masks must be worn while a team is playing defense in a game, during game/inning warm-ups. Defensive positions required to wear the infielder mask are 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases, Short Stop, and pitcher position. All categories covered by GEMSA must wear a infielder mask. If unable to provide an infielder mask for the current infielder position a batting helmet with a proper cage can be worn. Failure to do so can lead to a player being removed from the game.

- e. **CATCHERS EQUIPMENT** - Softball catchers must wear a mask, throat protector, helmet, shin guards and ATHLETIC SUPPORT WITH PELVIC PROTECTION during the game. Catchers (or other members of the defensive team) must also wear a mask, helmet and throat protector while receiving warm-up pitches, on or off the diamond.

NOTE - A helmet worn by a catcher may be the skull type without ear flaps.

EFFECT 1 - If the team does not use the proper catcher's equipment, the game will be forfeited.

EFFECT 2 - If the catcher refuses to wear the proper equipment, that player will be removed from the game. Repeat offences will be cause for ejection.

- f. **FOOTWEAR** - No metal cleats shall be allowed within GEMSA League play.

- g. **BATS** – SOFTBALL CANADA RULEBOOK Appendix 2 A):

All bats must comply with the "OFFICIAL BAT" specifications as defined in the Softball Canada Rulebook Appendix 2 A). No team may use illegal or altered bats.

2. PLAYERS (P)

- a. Prior to the game, all players must be listed on the score sheet and line-up card. The order listed on the line-up card must be followed throughout the entire game.
- b. **LATE PLAYERS** - Players coming late may be added to the bottom of the line-up, prior to the first pitch of the third inning. After this time, the player will be ineligible to play in that game.
- c. **CASTS** - Plaster, metal, or other hard substance casts in the final form, may not be worn in a game.
- d. **JEWELRY** - Exposed jewelry such as wrist watches, bracelets, earrings, neck chains or any other items judged dangerous by the umpire, may not be worn during the game. Medical alert bracelets or medical alert necklaces are not considered jewelry but if worn, must be taped to the body.

NOTE - any exposed metal (other than a cast) may be considered legal if it is adequately covered by a soft material taped and approved by the umpire.

EFFECT - Players must remove jewelry. The umpire shall issue one warning for the team, If the players fail to remove their jewelry after the warning is given, they will be removed from the game.

- e. **PICK-UP PLAYERS** - A team can pick up a player, or players, to complete their lineup card to a maximum of 12 players. Teams may not pick-up a player if they already have 12 or more players on their lineup card.
 - Pick-up players are allowed from the Category below and the same Division or below, up to a MAXIMUM of 12 players on the lineup card.

EXAMPLE 1. U19B may pick up from U17 B/C/D, but not from U17A.

2. U19 C/D may pick up from U17 C/D, but not from U17A or U17B.

- Pick-Up players must be recorded on the line-up card and score sheet as a pick-up player for both league and GEMSA playoff games using a P/U beside the players' name. This must also be reported at the plate to the Umpire and opposing coach as well as the name of the player with the submission of the scores to GEMSA. If a player is picked up during GEMSA Playoffs, said game must not interfere with the player's original team.
 - Lastly, teams may use pick-ups to fill out their roster but cannot drop or release players for the purpose of picking up.
- f. **OVER-AGE PLAYERS** - All teams U11 through U19 may have up to 2 over-age players on the team roster.
- The over-age players may be no more than 1 year advanced from the current playing category of the team in question.
 - Over-age players are not allowed to play defensively as a pitcher or a catcher.
 - Coaches must indicate over-age players on their team's line-up card for all games using an "O/A" beside the player's name.

NOTE: Over-age players in U11, U13, and U15 are not permitted to compete in Provincial play as per the Softball Alberta handbook.

3. STARTING AND DURATION OF GAME

- a. (P) - Game to start at the time stipulated on the schedules. Teams will be given 15 minutes grace from the scheduled starting time, to make an appearance at the diamond or obtain sufficient players.

NOTE – U9 Teams can play with as few as 6 Players and will play a Maximum of 5 innings.

- Any B, C/D team will be able to play with 8 registered players, without the 9th batter being an automatic out. If a player is injured or ejected from the game, then the team forfeits the game.
 - If a B, C/D team starts with 9 players and, due to an injury, is left with 8 players, the team may continue with that 9th player being an automatic out.
 - If a B, C/D team starts with 9 players and a player is ejected from the game, the team forfeits the game.
- b. (A) - If weather permits, all games must be played as scheduled. A coach or manager cannot postpone or cancel scheduled games without the permission of the GEMSA Scheduler 24 hours in advance. Failure to comply will result in a loss of points to the offending team.
- c. (A) - Games postponed due to weather or other conditions will be rescheduled by the coaches and reported to the GEMSA Scheduler by the home team. The GEMSA Scheduler will then make arrangements for an Umpire through the umpire-in-chief or their approved designate.
- d. (P) - If a double header is played on a regularly scheduled playing night, where one game is a make-up game and one game is the regularly scheduled game, the first game shall be the regularly scheduled game, and the second game shall be the make-up game.

- e. (P) - If a double header is played on a non-scheduled date where both games are make-up games, the first game played shall be the first game missed chronologically in the regular schedule, and the second game played shall be the next game missed chronologically in the regular schedule.
- f. (P) - INNINGS: All games will be 7 innings, except when one team leads the other by their respective run rule after the team behind has batted in 5 innings.
- g. (A) - Ground rules are to be stipulated by the plate umpire and agreed to by both coaches prior to the game. If the coaches cannot agree, the umpire's decision is final.
- h. (P) - If a game is tied after seven innings or after the time limit, each team shall receive one (1) point.
- i. (A) - All GEMSA teams from U9 to U19 will travel during the regular softball season to the various diamond locations as scheduled.
- j. (P) - All U9 and U11 games and practices will start at 6:30 PM. Umpires are notified of this and teams that do not show or are late will be charged all umpire fees.

NOTE - U9 Games will not be supplied umpires – and therefore will not be required to pay umpire fees.

- k. The Umpire is empowered to call a game at any time due to darkness, rain, fire, panic, or other cause, which puts the patrons, players or umpires in peril. A regulation game will be declared if 3 or more innings are complete, or the home team has scored more runs than the other team in 2.5 innings. A game that is not considered regulation may be rescheduled, and if rescheduled, shall be replayed from the beginning.

4. SCHEDULING

- a. Monday and Wednesday shall be designated as scheduled days for games in the U13 and U17 categories for all GEMSA teams.
- b. Tuesday and Thursday shall be designated as scheduled days for games in the U11, U15 and U19 categories for all GEMSA teams.
- c. Friday, Saturday and Sunday shall be used only when necessary for make up games and games required to even out scheduled games.
- d. Re-scheduling, due to rainout or properly cancelled games, do not have to adhere to these guidelines, as long as; fields are available and both teams agree to the use of a different day. Umpire availability may also be given consideration. Rescheduling must be sanctioned by the GEMSA Scheduler.
- e. All U11 teams will have a mandatory practice on Tuesday nights and play a game on Thursday nights in the month of May. Then, in June all U11 teams will be given a two game per week schedule on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.
- f. All U9 Teams will play 1 game per week, on Wednesdays.

NOTE – Game nights may be adjusted in U17/U19 divisions by A/B Categories if a majority agreement can be reached by the teams withing the category.

UMPIRES

1. UMPIRES (Unofficial)

- a. (P) - Both teams will supply one umpire each. Home team will supply a plate umpire, and visitors will supply the base umpire.
- b. The signature of the plate umpire **MUST** be on the winning score sheet.

2. UMPIRES (Official)

- a. (P) - Official umpires will be members of an Accredited Umpire Association, as approved of by The Alberta Softball Umpires Association (ASUA)
- b. Base umpires: When an official base umpire has not been supplied, either team may supply one if requested by the umpire.
- c. (P) - The plate umpire is to hold possession of the line up card throughout the game.
- d. The signature of the plate umpire **MUST** be on the winning score sheet.
- e. Teams forfeiting games or failing to show up for games, are still responsible for their share of umpire fees. If not paid, the teams association will be billed from GEMSA.

3. UMPIRE FEES - (A)

- a. Single Umpire: \$50.00
- b. Double Umpire: \$45.00 each

4. DEFINITIONS

- a. **EJECTION** – The act of any umpire ordering a player, official, or any team member to leave the game and the grounds for a rule violation for the remainder of the game.

EFFECT - Ejections will result in a one game suspension.

NOTE: This is extended to fans/spectators/parents/guardians and may result in forfeiture of the game.

- b. **REMOVAL** – When an umpire declares a player or coach ineligible for further participation in a game as a result of a rule violation. Any person so removed may continue to sit on the bench but may not participate further in the game.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- Half of umpire fees will be paid by each team, prior to the commencement of the game
- HOUSE RULES are NOT permitted
- UNOFFICIAL umpires may not ask for game fees
- UNOFFICIAL umpires cannot cancel/forfeit game(s) due to non-payment of game fees
- All removals or ejections must be reported to GEMSA by email to commissioner@gemsa.ca

PROTESTS AND APPEALS

(Regular Season Play Only)

GEMSA Contact – 1st point of Communication.

GEMSA Commissioner - Greg Clark 780-983-8895

1. PROTEST PROCEDURE

- a. (P) - Make reference Softball Canada rulebook – Rules 1.1.9 and Rules 1.2.8 through 1.2.14
- b. (A) – Protest on player eligibility will only be accepted up to 24 hours after completed game and must follow the same procedure to lodge a protest including the fees.
- c. (A) - Each protest and appeal must be made in writing within 24 hours and must be accompanied by a bond of **\$250.00** in cash or certified cheque or e-transfer. If the protest is upheld, the bond shall be returned. Otherwise, it shall revert to the general fund of the organization hearing the protest or appeal.

2. (A) - LEVELS OF PROTESTS AND APPEALS

- a. GEMSA COMMISSIONER: shall hear and make all rulings on protests, regarding the interpretation of playing rules.
- b. GEMSA Board of Directors: shall hear and make rulings on all appeals against any action or decision made by the GEMSA Commissioner. Appeals to this decision must be made in writing to the GEMSA President within 24 hours and be accompanied by a **\$250.00** bond payable to GEMSA. This decision is final and binding.
- c. (A) - All rulings on protests or appeals to be made by the Commissioners or Committees, must be made within 48 hours. Copies to be sent to the GEMSA Commissioner and both parties involved in the protest or appeals.

GEMSA PLAYING RULES - RECREATION

1. PITCHING AND BASELINE DISTANCES

	Pitching Distance	Baseline Distance	Ball Size
U19	43'	60'	12"
U17	43'	60'	12"
U15	40'	60'	12"
U13	38'	55'	11"
U11	35'	45'	11"
U9	30'	45'	11"

2. START TIMES

- a. U9 & U11 – 6:30 P.M.
- b. U13, U15, U17 and U19 – 7:00 P.M.
 - All double headers will start at 6:00 P.M.

3. PITCHING RULES

- a. (P) - SOFTBALL CANADA RULE 4 PITCHING REGULATIONS
 - A pitcher who is moved to another position on the playing field, may return to the pitching position.
 - Windmill, sling shot, and orthodox pitches are legal in all categories.
 - Pitchers may pitch a maximum of:
 1. U9 one (1) inning per game
 2. U11 three (3) innings per game
 3. U13-U15 categories four (4) innings per game.
 - Should a pitcher throw on (1) pitch, excluding warm-up pitches, this is classified as a complete inning pitched. In the event of extra innings, the pitching rule is not in effect.

EFFECT - The penalty for pitcher(s) exceeding the limit of innings pitched is that the coach is ejected; player(s) is removed from pitching position.

- After bringing their hands together to begin the pitch, a pitcher must pause for a minimum of two seconds and a maximum of five seconds prior to starting the delivery of the pitch.

4. (P) - U19, U17, U15 DIVISION RULES ALL CATEGORIES

a. THIRD STRIKE RULE

- In effect for U19, U17 and U15 teams.

b. INFIELD FLY RULE

- In effect for U19, U17 and U15 teams.

c. BATTING

- The team at bat will be retired when there have been 3 out, or after the 5th run has scored in an inning.

d. BASE RUNNERS

- May not lose contact with the base, until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

e. RUN RULE

- If after 5 complete innings, one team is ahead by 11 runs, the game is over.

f. TIME LIMIT

- No new inning to start after 2 hours.
- Games start as per time noted on schedules.

5. (P) - U13, U11, U9 DIVISION RULES ALL CATEGORIES

a. THIRD STRIKE RULE

- Is NOT in effect for U13, U11 and U9 teams.

b. INFIELD FLY RULE

- Is NOT in effect for U13, U11 and U9 teams.

c. BATTING

- The team at bat will be retired when there have been 3 out, or after the 5th run has scored in an inning.

d. BASE RUNNERS

- May not lose contact with the base, until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

e. RUN RULE

- If after 5 complete innings, one team is ahead by 11 runs, the game is over.

f. TIME LIMIT

- U9 – No new inning to start after 50 minutes.

- U11 - No new inning to start after 1 hour and 30 minutes.
- U13 - No new inning to start after 2 hours.
- Games start as per time noted on schedules.

6. (P) – U11, U9 PITCHING RULES - INSTRUCTIONS

EXCEPTION - U11A, which will not use “Player/Coach Pitch” at any time.

EXCEPTION – U9, which will not use “Player/Coach Pitch” until June 1st of the current playing season – see page 25.

- a. U11 PLAYER/COACH PITCH RULE – in effect until the last day of May in the current playing season.
- b. Rules are in effect after the 4th player-pitched ball. From the 1st day of June of the current playing season and onwards, U11 is player pitch only.
- c. **EXAMPLE - Batter # 1 (B1)** is at the plate. After the 4th ball, the batter will have a count against them. It will either be 4 balls, 0 strikes (4-0), 4-1 or 4-2. The coach, or designated pitcher for the offensive team (B1’s coach or selected parent), will pitch to their own batter. The number of pitches that the batter will receive from the coach/parent is dependent upon the number of strikes that the pitcher had achieved against that batter prior to throwing the 4th "ball". All batters continue using the same rules:
 - Count 4-0, coach parent may throw up to 3 pitches.
 - Count 4-1, coach parent may throw up to 2 pitches.
 - Count 4-2, coach parent may throw only 1 pitch.
- d. If the batter uses up all their strikes without hitting the ball, they are out. There is no opportunity to walk. Every pitch is considered a called strike no matter where the pitch is thrown. The batter does not have to swing to strike out, nor does the pitch have to be in the strike zone.
- e. The coach pitcher is to deliver the ball from the rubber. Starting on the pitching rubber, and one step towards home is permitted while delivering the pitch and may pitch an underhand toss or windmill pitch.
- f. Pitches (pitch) from the coach or parent are the only opportunity that the batter will get to hit the ball and get on base.
- g. On the third strike only, if the batter hits a foul ball, they will be granted an additional pitch (or pitches), unless the foul ball is caught by a defensive player. This will be the same as regular rules in regard to a third strike foul ball.
- h. The pitcher (defence) will remain on the infield while the coach/parent (offense) offense pitches, and may field balls hit into play.
- i. If a ball hit into play by the batter that:
 - Comes in contact with or is touched by the parent/coach, whether intentional or accidental

- Is interfered with by the coach/parent acting as the pitcher - as determined by the umpire, the play will be called dead & treated like a foul ball. There is no advancing home on passed ball / wild pitch or any legally delivered pitch by the designated coach / parent pitcher.

7. U11 SPECIAL NOTES

- a. Stealing 2nd and 3rd base is allowed at all times once the ball has left the pitcher's hand.
- b. Advancing home on a wild pitch/passed ball is permitted, except when a coach is pitching.
- c. There is no limit to the number of bases that can be advanced on overthrows that remain in play.

NOTE - Associations are reminded that the “Recommended Minor Softball Rules” at the back of the Softball Canada rule book are not used by GEMSA.

8. U9 PITCHING RULES

- d. In effect until the last day of May in the current playing season, players will not pitch. Commencing on June 1st of the current playing season the Player/Coach Pitch rule comes into effect.
- e. Pitching coach will pitch a maximum of 5 balls per batter (except if the 5th pitch is hit foul, see more below). The batter can swing at all 5, or none.
- f. If the batter has not put the ball in play after the 5th pitch, a tee will be set up by the coach for the player to hit from.
- g. If a batter fouls off the 5th pitched ball, the coach will keep pitching. If they miss the 6th pitch following a foul, the tee is set up for the batter. (i.e. Batter cannot be out on a foul ball)

9. BATTER’S BOX

- h. After entering the Batter’s Box, the batter must remain in the box with at least one foot while taking signals and practice swings between pitches.

EXCEPTIONS

- If the ball is hit foul or fair
- On the swing, slap or check swing
- If forced out of the box by the pitch
- On a wild pitch or passed ball
- If there is an attempted play
- If time out has been called
- If the pitcher leaves the 8-foot circle, or the catcher leaves the box.

EFFECT - If the batter leaves the batter's box and delays play, and none of these exceptions apply, the Umpire may warn the batter or call a strike. Note: Any number of warnings and called strikes can be made with each batter. A pitch does not have to be thrown and the ball is dead (Softball Canada Rulebook 5.4.3 d) vii).

10. (P) - TOSSING OF THE BAT

- i. Batters throwing their bat during the act of batting will be called out. This applies to all categories. No warning will be issued by the umpire.

11. (P) - MERCY RULE

- j. The losing team may, at any time, concede the game by informing the umpire that the game is conceded. At the end of an inning, where the existing run rule is surpassed, the losing team must concede.

12. TIME LIMITS FOR ALL TEAMS

- k. The consequences of leaving a game before the time limit, will result in a forfeit for the team leaving, unless the game is conceded.

13. CO-ED TEAMS U15, U13, U11, U9

- l. Co-Ed teams will be allowed at U15, U13, U11 and U9. Co-Ed teams are considered "male" teams for the sake of tiering. Placement within divisions (ie. U13 Co-Ed will play in U13 Boys division)
 - U9 and U11 co-ed teams play against U9 and U11 male and female teams.
 - U13 and U15 co-ed teams will be placed in the Boys Division if there is one, if there is not enough teams to complete a boys division, then teams will be placed in the appropriate division (B, C/D) based on the GEMSA Registrars feedback
 - Batting order for co-ed teams shall be alternating genders as much as possible depending on player ratios.

14. UNLIMITED SUBSTITUTION (U9, U11, U13, U15, U17, U19)

m. Offensive Team (Batting)

- When a team is on offense, all players on the roster and in attendance must bat according to the lineup card submitted to and held by the umpire.
- Any player who arrives after the first pitch of the first inning and before the first pitch of the third inning will be added to the bottom of the batting order on the official lineup card held by the umpire.
- Any player who arrives after the first pitch of the third inning cannot be added to the line-up.
- Injured players that are unable to bat cannot return to play in a game after being declared injured and scratched out of the line-up card (batting order).

n. Defensive Team (Fielding)

- When a team is on defense, there will be an unlimited substitution rule in effect.
- No defensive player may sit in back-to-back innings.
- A partial inning played by a defensive player does not constitute an inning played.

EFFECT - With the exception of players declared as injured and scratched off of the line-up card, a coach that does not allow every player on the team's registration roster that was submitted to GEMSA and is in attendance at the game to bat or instructs the player to sit back-to-back innings will be subject to disciplinary actions by GEMSA.

GEMSA PLAYING RULES – “A” DIVISION

This program provides an opportunity for a more competitive level of softball, for U11, U13, U15, U17 and U19 players. Each Association will strive to provide teams in each category.

1. PLAYING RULES

- a. GEMSA Handbook
- b. Softball Alberta Official Handbook
- c. Softball Canada Rulebook
- d. At the conclusion of a tie game, each team will be awarded one point.
- e. When a legal substitute has been entered by a team in a game, the re-entry rule is waived in the event of an injury. The re-entered player will assume the batting position of the injured player. The injured player may not return to the game.
- f. “A” Division teams must use the playing balls that have been approved by SOFTBALL CANADA for fast pitch (both balls to be the same brand).
- g. All teams MUST use a double base (1st base).
- h. Time Limits:
 - No new inning to start after 2 hours (2hr time limit).
 - No new inning to start after 1.5hrs (U11 only)
- i. Games will be 7 innings. If after 5 completed innings one team is ahead by 7 runs, the game is over (SOFTBALL CANADA rule).
- j. (A) - A team will be given 15 minutes grace from the scheduled starting time to make an appearance at the diamond, or to obtain sufficient players.
- k. The team at bat will be retired when there have been 3 out, or after the 5th run has scored in an inning.
- l. Pitching Rules U13 & U15 Categories Only
 - U13 Category - Pitchers may pitch a maximum of Four (4) innings per game.
 1. Should a pitcher throw one (1) pitch, excluding warm-up pitches, this is classified as a complete inning pitched. In the event of extra innings, the pitching rule is not in effect. The penalty for pitcher(s) exceeding the limit of innings pitched is that the coach is ejected; player(s) is removed from pitching position.
 - U11 Category - Pitchers may pitch a maximum of Three (3) innings per game.
 1. Should a pitcher throw one (1) pitch, excluding warm-up pitches, this is classified as a complete inning pitched. In the event of extra innings, the pitching rule is not in effect. The penalty for pitcher(s) exceeding the limit of innings pitched is that the coach is ejected; player(s) is removed from pitching positions.

2. GAME PROCEDURE

- m.** If a double header is played on a regularly scheduled playing night, where one game is a make up game, and the other is a regularly scheduled game, the first game shall be the regularly scheduled game, and the second game shall be the make up game.
- n.** If a double header is played on a non-scheduled date where both games are make-up games, the first game played shall be the first game missed chronologically in the regular schedule, and the second game played shall be the next game missed chronologically in the regular schedule.

3. MISCELLANEOUS

- o.** (A) - All coaches are encouraged to use their complete roster for each game.
- p.** (P) - All coaches must wear reasonable attire: shirts and appropriate footwear. No opened toed shoes, high heels or sandals

EFFECT - Failure to comply will result in removal from the game. This includes tournaments.

- q.** (A) - The actions of all team officials shall be honourable. Suspension of offending officials will be enforced if rules are breached.

GEMSA FINALS

GEMSA FINALS INFORMATION

- a. Approve planning, scheduling, and operation of GEMSA Finals. The committee shall consist of: All members of the GEMSA Board.
- b. The committee shall hold a meeting at least 2 weeks before GEMSA Playoffs
- c. GEMSA FINALS DATES will be posted on the GEMSA website and communicated to the associations prior to the current season start date.
- d. All GEMSA Finals documents are available on the GEMSA website at www.gemsa.ca two weeks before the finals start date. Team Roster, Coach information and Rule Acknowledgement, must be filled out and emailed to registrar@gemsa.ca by June 15th of the current playing season for verification. Pick up player roster must be emailed to registrar@gemsa.ca two days prior to team's first scheduled game.
- e. GEMSA Finals games postponed due to inclement weather, shall be rescheduled on an hour to hour/day to day basis.
- f. Umpire fees will be paid by GEMSA.
- g. Failure to show up at a game to have sufficient players to start a game, will result in forfeiture of the game after a 15-minute grace period.
- h. Two players from a lower category/division may be picked up but must be declared before the first playoff game. Only these two players will be allowed to play as pick-up players. Should a scheduling conflict arise, the pick-up player(s) must play on their original team before being allowed to play as a pick-up player.
- i. Any roster discrepancies between line-up on score sheet and official player/pick up roster will result in forfeiture of the game.
- j. Both teams shall submit the game scores as instructed in the tournament information package **immediately** following each playoff game. Failure to do so could result in forfeiture of the game.
 - If score sheets are not sent in within 30 minutes of the game – the score sheet that has been submitted will be used as the official one. Any discrepancies will be ignored.
- k. GEMSA Finals for Divisions unable to participate in the scheduled finals will be determined but must occur no later the July 15th of the current playing season.

PROTESTS

- a. Make reference Softball Canada rulebook – Rules 1.1.9 and Rules 1.2.8 through 1.2.14
- b. Protest on player eligibility **must** be done immediately when noticed but no longer than **30 minutes** of the completion of the game.
- c. A **\$250.00** cash bond is required to proceed with the protest. If the protest is upheld, the bond shall be returned. The ruling on the protest shall be made prior to the next game that the affected teams are scheduled to play, and/or game that may be affected by the ruling. A postponement may be in order.
- d. The protest committee will consist of two (2) GEMSA Board members; one of which should be the commissioner or designate, and one (1) designated Umpire representative. The GEMSA Board members and Umpire representative can have NO affiliations to the teams concerned or the game in question.
- e. The decision made by the protest committee **will be considered final**; no appeals will be allowed.

GEMSA Commissioner - Greg Clark 780-983-8895

SPORTS INJURY and LIABILITY INSURANCE INFORMATION

Coverage for practices, games, and team travel. One plan covers all participants, managers, coaches, executives, and field officials throughout the entire season.

Why Liability Insurance?

Because of your operations or actions, you are open for possible suit from Third Parties. You may not be liable, but you will need to be defended in court. A Liability policy pays for this defence, as well as any costs found against you. Legal fees can be very expensive, and this can be an affordable way to have them covered. This policy covers your legal liability for bodily injury to or damage to property of others, such as spectators, passers-by, property owners and others resulting from your activity. In addition, your legal liability for injury to participants is covered.

ACTIVITIES COVERED

Consists of sports events sanctioned or authorized by you, and all related training activities authorized by you.

WHO IS COVERED?

All members collectively, including Executives, Managers, Coaches, Trainers, Officials and Volunteers, while acting within the scope of their duties on your behalf.

ELIGIBILITY

The program is designed principally for Associations at National, Provincial or Local levels, also groups of various types. Forms are available online at www.softballalberta.ca and are to be turned in to Softball Alberta.

ALBERTA AMATEUR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

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