

**INDEPENDENCE GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
**(MEMBER USSSA)**

**OFFICIAL RULES OF IGSA**  
*Revised March 2011*

**SECTION I – THE LEAGUE**

- A. Purpose: The Independence Girls Softball Association, Inc. Independence, Missouri (here and after called IGSA) is organized for the purpose of promoting girls softball in our community.
- B. Administration: IGSA is a self-sustained organization assisted by members of the community. All League competition shall be played under the jurisdiction of the aforementioned. The Board of Directors will administer all matters of the League and will be responsible for the financial direction of the League funds. The Board of Directors will establish rules, regulations and general policy for the operation of the League.
- C. A board member (Volunteer in Charge) will be present to make any and all decisions related to IGSA rules and/or any other decisions relating to the league during games on game nights. This person will be paid a small fee for this service.
- D. This is a participation League for the purpose of fostering sports competition.
- E. Sponsors: Sponsorship will be accepted from individuals or organizations of our community whose activity is not regarded as detrimental to the welfare of our youth. Sponsors will pay the standard fee and will not be approached for any other expenses such as uniforms or shirts, etc.
- F. The League shall be divided into the following five divisions:
  - 1. T-Ball                               5- and 6-year-olds
  - 2. Machine Pitch                   8 and under
  - 3. Division 1                       10 and under
  - 4. Division 2                       12 and under
  - 5. Division 3                       14 and under
  - 6. Division 5                       18 and under or must be a freshman in the  
Up coming school year to play in this division.
- G. Rules and regulations: Official fast pitch softball rules and USSSA codes shall govern this League. Such other rules and regulations as might be deemed necessary for the proper function of the League may be voted on and become part thereto, if passed by a simple majority of the Board of Directors of IGSA. The IGSA rules supercede all other official softball rules.
- H. The organization is organized exclusively for the charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future tax code (hereinafter “Internal Revenue Code”).
- I. No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, directors, trustees, officers, or other private

persons except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Section 1 hereof.

- J. Notwithstanding any other provision of these sections, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (i) by any organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or (ii) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170c(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- K. Upon the dissolution of the organization, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the organization, the remaining assets shall be distributed to one or more nonprofit funds, foundations, or organizations that have established their tax-exempt status under Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- L. The organization or members in their official capacities shall not, directly or indirectly, participate or intervene (in any way, including the publishing or distributing of statements) in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office; or devote more than an insubstantial part of its activities to attempting to influence legislation by propaganda or otherwise.

## **SECTION II – CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE MANAGERS, COACHES AND SPECTATORS**

- A. The manager's responsibility is to set a good example for the team by their conduct, both on and off the playing field. Prime concern should be the team members and the development of their physical, mental and moral character.
- B. The manager should have absolute control of the team at all times, but should exercise good judgment and tact in disciplining the players. The manager is held responsible for the conduct of the coaches, players and their fans. The managers and coaches shall not question balls and strikes or any other judgment call.
- C. No alcoholic beverages are allowed at any IGSA function. Smoking will be allowed in the paved striped parking lot ONLY. No animals are allowed in the park while IGSA has possession of the park.
- D. Any manager or coach ejected from a game will be ineligible to be in attendance (on the field or in the park) at their next played game.
- E. Players, managers, umpires and coaches shall not mingle with spectators, nor sit in the stands during the game.
- F. If there are violations of the code of ethics or rules of conduct, both managers and the offender will be warned once per game. If there are any further violations, the manager and offender will be ejected from the game being played. Repeat offenders will be dealt with on a case by case situation.
- G. Intimidation tactics will not be tolerated from the managers, coaches, players and spectators. This will include any noisemakers.**

- H. Violations of the rules and regulations of the League's Codes of Ethics for Managers will be grounds for the Board to take positive actions to reprimand, suspend or remove the offender as they see fit.

### **SECTION III – MANAGERS AND COACHES**

- A. Managers and coaches are prohibited from standing behind the plate Umpire during the game.
- B. Each manager is responsible for providing a scorekeeper for his or her team. Lineup cards will be filled out and presented to the scorekeepers by each manager five minutes prior to game time. This form will include the starting lineup as well as benched and absent players with reasons stated.
- C. The manager must field at least 7 eligible players no later than five minutes after the scheduled time of the game, or lose the game by forfeit. The team must field at least 7 eligible players at all times during the game, or forfeit. **No out will be recorded playing short of players.**
- D. In the absence of the manager, the Umpire shall ascertain the name of the person acting as manager. A coach or parent assuming the status of “acting manager” shall assume the responsibilities of the manager.
- E. All managers shall be 18 years of age or older and coaches shall be 16 years of age or older.
- F. A person may only manage one team in the League.
- G. All managers and coaches must complete required forms for the City of Independence, Missouri Park and Recreation Department. If background check is returned for any reason, this person will not be allowed to participate as a manager or coach in neither practices nor games. The City of Independence will not give a permit for any field allocation until the required background screening has been finalized and cleared for all managers.

### **SECTION IV – PLAYERS**

- A. Any girl who meets the age requirements is eligible for League play.
- B. Player participation shall consist of the following:
  - 1. T-Ball and Machine Pitch – all players play
  - 2. Divisions 1, 2, 3 and 5 – Each player must play at least two uninterrupted innings on defense. A batting order including all eligible players present at the game will be established at the beginning of the game and maintained throughout the game. Late arrivals will be added at the bottom of the batting order. \*The only exception to this rule is when the player:
  - a. is benched because of unexcused absence from practices;
  - b. is expelled from the game by the Umpire;
  - c. is benched because of an ejection in the previous game;

- d. is injured or ill;
- e. arrives after the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning. The players' name and the inning in which she arrived must be reported to both scorekeepers and recorded on the score sheets. After the third inning, late arrivals may be added but if they are added to the batting order, it must be at the bottom;
- f. is benched because of disciplinary reasons;
- g. game doesn't make three innings.

\* Failure to comply with the participation rule will result in forfeiture of the game.

- C. Playing under an assumed name, or falsification of any registration form, will constitute ineligibility. All players must be registered with the League.
- D. Any player ejected from a game will sit out (on the bench in uniform) the next game that they attend and may be subject to any other disciplinary action as the Board sees fit. (Exception – thrown bat rule.)
- E. Unexcused absences from two practices may be cause for a player to be benched for the following game. Such ineligibility must be noted on the official lineup card. Managers, please use discretion regarding this rule.
- F. If a player is removed from a game because of injury, IGSA may require a doctor's release in order to return to play.

## **SECTION V – TEAMS**

- A. Each team roster will be composed of no more than 15 players and no less than 8 registered players.
- B. The playing field and bench shall be restricted to only the players, manager (1), coaches (2), bat person (1), and umpires. Divisions 1 through 5 will play with 10 players on the playing field from one team. The 10<sup>th</sup> player is a “rover” position. The “rover” must be positioned in the grass until the ball is hit.
- C. During the game, except for the batter, base runners, the player “on deck” and coaches in the coach's box, all players shall be on their benches or in the bullpen. When the team is in the field, all reserve players shall be on their bench or in the bullpen.
- D. Player pool: When all team rosters are filled, all players not assigned to a team will have their registration placed in the player pool. Assignments will be made by the League as soon as space is available.
- E. Players may be added up to the start of the season in the order we receive registration, and offered to managers in order of the draft. After the season starts, no player shall be added unless the team roster is down to less than 10 players.
- F. Team assignments will be made by the League guidelines. There will be no tryouts or recruitments by the managers or coaches.
- G. Teams should be gathered at the field 15 minutes prior to the start of the game. No infield practice allowed for either team. Both teams may warm at the same time for 5 minutes. Warm-up time can be waived at the discretion of the umpire if games are running behind.

- H. Practice time should be limited to four hours per week.
- I. IGSA will provide insurance to team members, only during the regular season (pre-season and IGSA tournament included) and only for IGSA games and practices.

## SECTION VI – EQUIPMENT

- A. Equipment provided by the League or your own personal equipment must comply with USSSA and/or ASA standards: bats, catcher’s masks, chest protectors, shin guards, batting helmets, face masks, chin straps, uniforms, practice and game balls. Official game balls will be provided by the League and supplied to the managers prior to the start of the season. The home team manager will be responsible for providing the game balls, one of which will be new. The manager will be responsible for returning all equipment at the completion of the final game.
- B. Players must wear uniforms provided by the League. All shirts will be tucked in with no alterations.
- C. No metal cleats will be allowed in any of the divisions.

## SECTION VII – GAMES (DIVISIONS 1, 2, 3 AND 5)

- A. When at bat, a team may score a maximum of five runs per inning. When the fifth run has crossed home plate, the turn at bat is completed. NOTE: The seventh inning will also have a five run limit.
- B. Games shall be seven innings in length, time permitting. Ballgames a time limit of 1 hour and 10 minutes with no new inning starting after 1 hour and 5 minutes will have. The plate umpire will be the official timekeeper. If the game is tied after time is up, the game will be declared a tie. (Time limits may be changed if needed in case of limited field time at a later date.) **Game time begins one minute after pre-game conference.**
- C. All games shall be played on a regulation diamond with the following modifications:
 

Division 1	Pitching distance = 34 feet
	Distance between bases = 60 feet
Divisions 2	Pitching distance = 40 feet
	Distance between bases = 60 feet
Division 3 & 5	Pitching distance = <b>43</b> feet
	Distance between bases = 60 feet
- D. A game called because of weather, darkness or any cause which makes further play impossible shall be an official game if it complies with any of the following:
  1. Three innings have been completed.
  2. 2 ½ innings have been completed with the home team leading.
  3. One hour of playing time
  4. In case of a tie, each team is credited with ½ win.

Games not qualifying shall be replayed from the start. If a game of official length is called during an incomplete inning with the home team behind in the score, the score reverts to the last complete inning.

- E. Cancellation of games: Games will be called off only by the Parks and Recreation Department due to poor weather or wet field conditions. When in doubt as to playing conditions, it is the responsibility of all teams to be at the diamond ready to play. Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department is the final authority as to whether the games will start and field conditions are playable or not. IGSA does not want games to start or continue when there are storm warning alerts and/or siren warnings are in effect. It will be up to the discretion of the UIC (Umpire in Charge) or IGSA Board Members to make the decision.
- F. Division 1 only – The catcher will not be required to hold the third strike for an out. There will be no infield fly rule.
- G. In Division 1, stealing will be allowed. Runners starting at 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> base are entitled to steal one base per pitch with liability to be put out. Runners starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> base may not steal home.
- H. Division 1 only – After four (4) walks per inning, the offensive team will supply a member of the coaching staff to pitch to their own team from the pitching rubber. No walks at this time. **Coaches will either strike out the batter or the batter will hit the ball. NO limit of pitches. If a pitcher hits a batter with a pitched ball, that will be considered as one of the 4 walks. If a batted ball hits the coach who is pitching, the ball is dead and runners will get one base.** This rule will not apply at tournament play.
- I. Thrown bat rule – On the 1<sup>st</sup> thrown bat, both teams will be warned. Any player throwing a bat after the warning shall be declared out. The play will be dead. Any repeat offenders are **disqualified for the remainder of the game.** Managers will notify Division Representative.
- J. When the outcome of the game can no longer change because of the run limit, the umpires shall consult with the managers of both teams between innings and (1) determine if both teams have fulfilled participation requirements and (2) determine if the losing manager would like to continue the game to the time limit or stop the game at that point (if participation requirements have been met). If the game is continued, it will not go past the time limit.
- K. If there is only one paid umpire at a game, the duties and jurisdiction shall extend to all points of the playing field and to all players covered by this code and the umpire shall occupy any part of the playing field which, in the umpire's opinion will best enable the umpire to discharge their duties.
- L. If an umpire feels that the safety of the batters is compromised because of wild pitching, he/she may move to remedy the situation.
- M. In order to increase actual playing time and to limit down time between innings, **if the catcher or pitcher is on base, a courtesy runner can be used. The courtesy runner is the last available batter.**
- N. **No illegal pitch will be called on divisions younger than Division 2. Divisions 2 and older will only have a ball on batter called and no advance of runner.**

- O. Conferences
  - 1. Offense will be allowed **1** conference per inning.
  - 2. Defense will be allowed **3** conferences **per game**.
- P. Batting out of order – If the violation is noticed while the batter is still at bat, the correct batter will be inserted and the present count will remain.
  - 1. Division 1 – Incorrect batter will remain where play ended. EXAMPLE: If the batter made an out, the out remains in force, and if the batter reached base, she will be placed on first, and the correct batter will then bat.
  - 2. Division 2, 3 and 4 – The runners that were on base will return to their original base, and the correct batter will bat, (just as if the wrong batter had not batted). EXCEPTION: If an out was recorded, the out will stand (first offense). If it is the second offense, the team will be given an out and the correct batter will bat. If a third offense occurs, the team will be given an out and the manager will be ejected.

### **SECTION VIII – SCOREKEEPERS**

- A. Each team is to furnish a scorekeeper. Scorekeepers must sit together behind home plate. Scorekeeper for the team listed first on the schedule shall be known as the “Official Scorekeeper.” In the event only one scorekeeper is present, that scorekeeper shall become the “Official Scorekeeper.”
- B. Scorekeepers will use the official score sheets furnished by the League. A Scorekeeper’s Clinic will be held prior to season play. Each team is encouraged to have their scorekeeper or scorekeepers in attendance.
- C. No score will be kept for T-ball or Machine Pitch games.
- D. Home team is listed first and will occupy 3<sup>rd</sup> base bench.

### **SECTION IX – SCHEDULES**

- A. Game schedules will be provided by the League.
- B. Postponed games will be played as soon as possible and on the date rescheduled by IGSA. Failure of either team or both teams to play will result in forfeiture by either or both teams.

### **SECION X – PROTESTS (DIVISIONS 1, 2, 3 AND 5)**

- A. Only the Manager of the contesting team shall have the right to protest a game.
- B. The Board of Directors as soon as possible following the game involved shall discuss protests.
- C. The League Board of Directors must receive written reports from manager and umpires within 24 hours after the game. The particular rule or rules that were violated must be specifically stated in the exact manger in which they were violated. The League Board will make all protest decisions. All decisions are final An exception to the above mentioned 24-hour time limit is

during tournament. If it is necessary for a written report, it shall be given to a League board member before leaving the field that night.

- D. A fee of \$25 must be submitted with the protest. The fee will be returned if the protest is allowed.
- E. For other rules concerning protest, see ASA or USSSA rules.
- F. Protests need to be indicated at the time of the offense. The only exception is the participation rule. All score sheets and lineups must be turned in immediately after the game.

## **SECTION XI – TOURNAMENT**

- A. An IGSA tournament will be held immediately following the regular season. The tournament dates will be set at the same time the regular season schedule is done, and will follow on those dates, weather permitting. Any rainouts of regular season games not played before the tournament will be scheduled after the tournament
- B. The tournament will consist of a separate single elimination tournament for Divisions Machine Pitch, 1, 2 ,3 and 5. All teams will participate in the tournament. **The home team will be determined by a single coin toss by the home plate umpire who will determine which team calls the flip prior to the start of the game. Game time is 1 hour and 30 minutes.** Division 5 tournament will be dependent upon the number of league teams. If teams are limited, all reasonable efforts will be made to enter an outside tournament.
- C. There will be no ties. The game will continue with NO international tie breaker, using complete innings until a winner is determined.
- D. IGSA teams may enter non-League tournaments. The team must have prior League approval and all IGSA League Code of Ethics apply. IGSA will supplement \$50 towards the entry fee into one ASA or USSSA sanctioned tournament per team, per season.