

**2009 SHENANGO VALLEY MODIFIED  
SOFTBALL LEAGUE  
BY-LAWS**

## THE LEAGUE

### **1.01 NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Shenango Valley Modified Softball League, a member of the Amateur Softball Association of Pennsylvania. Our purpose is to promote the game of 10-player modified pitch softball in and around Mercer County, Pennsylvania. All churches, organizations or just a group of players (8) are always welcome to enter new teams. All managers should be a salesperson for the League at all times.

### **1.02 ORGANIZATION**

The League will have three (3) commissioners who shall be elected by the League managers. The voting can either be through roll call or written ballot.

The commissioners shall be responsible for the following duties:

- \*Presiding over, maintaining order at and recording minutes of all regular and special League meetings
- \*Represent League at outside functions
- \*Maintaining all League financial transactions and League budget
- \*Prepare League regular-season schedule
- \*Settle any scheduling disputes/conflicts between teams
- \*Maintain League won-lost records
- \*Act as liaison to COG and to local ASA umpire chapter

The League's Executive Board consists of one (1) representative from each of the League teams. The vote of the majority shall prevail in all matters.

### **1.03 ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The order of business at each meeting shall be: Call to order, roll call, reading of minutes, treasurer's report, committee reports, announcements, old business, new business and adjournment. This order may be suspended or changed by a majority vote. Roberts Rules of Order shall be followed during meetings.

Unless otherwise waived, no more than two representatives (Manager and/or Assistant Manager) from each team should attend League meetings. The By-Laws of the League may be amended or changed by a majority vote of the commissioners and Executive Board as long as the total number of teams present represents a quorum. Voting on issues will be by roll call but a written ballot will be used if two or more board members desire so.

Once a By-Law is approved for a season, it shall remain in effect for the entire season. League By-Laws can only be changed during the off-season.

## **2.01 LEAGUE STABILITY**

All teams are held bound to the League. Every effort between managers, assistant managers and players to secure team stability must be made.

## **2.02 SPLITTING/COMBINING TEAMS**

Any team with an excess of players that desire to split to form two separate teams shall notify the League commissioners at least two months before the regular season. The teams should also include a proposed plan of player distribution.

Two teams with a shortage of players that must combine in order to field a team shall also notify the League at least two months before the regular season. The Executive Board shall discuss and vote upon all team splitting and combining.

## **2.03 TEAM DISBANDMENT**

Any players on a team that disbands before the midway point of regular season (June 15) shall be placed into a special dispersal draft. The team with the lowest winning percentage in the league at that time shall have first pick in the dispersal draft. The team with the second-lowest win percentage shall pick second. This will proceed until the team with the best percentage makes its first pick.

The dispersal draft continues until all players have been chosen or all remaining teams decline to make further selections.

## **2.04 PLAYER DRAFT**

The League shall hold a draft for all unaffiliated players prior to the start of the regular season. Prospective players with no team preference should submit their name, phone number and other pertinent information to the League before the draft.

Players from teams that disband during the previous offseason are also eligible for the draft if they have not joined another existing or new team in the League.

Selection order will be determined by reverse order of finish from the previous season. The previous year's League champion shall have the final pick in each round.

## **THE RULES**

### **3.01 PLAYING RULES**

- A. All rules of the current season ASA “Official Rules of Softball” for 10-player modified pitch softball shall be in effect for all League regular season and playoff games, except where otherwise noted in the League By-Laws.
- B. Any team unable to field at least nine (9) eligible players within 15 minutes after the scheduled game time shall forfeit. The forfeiting team is also responsible for paying both umpires.
- C. The home team shall have the field for warm-ups for the first 30-minute period before the game. The visiting team will then have the field for the next 30 minutes. If there is less than one hour available due to weather/field conditions or previous games, the teams shall evenly divide the available warm-up time.
- D. The home team shall be responsible for contacting the umpires and visiting team manager at least 75 minutes before the start of the game if it must be postponed due to weather/field conditions. After this point, the umpires shall determine the playability of the field. Players should not assume a game is postponed until they have been notified by their manager.
- E. Ground rules for each League field shall be determined at a League meeting before the first game. If a situation arises that requires special ground rules for a game, they shall be set by the home team in conjunction with the umpires.
- F. Use of the ASA Extra Hitter (EH) rule is optional by either team. Teams may an unlimited number of Extra Hitters in their lineup. Extra Hitters are permitted to enter the field as a defensive player at any time during the game. The replaced player then becomes an “EH.” Each team must keep the same number of batters in the lineup for the entire game and batting positions may not change.
- G. Use of the ASA Designated Player (DP) rule is optional by either team. A team may have one (1) player bat for another player who will play only defense (the “flex” player). The DP may play the field but must replace the “flex” player in the field. The “flex” player may bat but must replace the DP. Once the DP enters the field as a defensive player or the “flex” player bats, the DP option is forfeited for the remainder of the game by that team.
- H. ASA Substitution Rule: Starting players may be removed from the lineup and re-enter only once at any time. Starting players must re-enter into their original place in the batting order. Substitutes may also re-enter the game once in the same place of insertion in the order.

- I. When a 10<sup>th</sup> player arrives for a team that started the game with nine players, the 10<sup>th</sup> player may be added only in the 10<sup>th</sup> position in the batting order. The 10<sup>th</sup> player may enter the game only if the team has not batted around. A team may list a 10<sup>th</sup> player in absentia but will be charged with an out if the player is not present when his place in the order is due up.
- J. If a team starts a game with only 10 players, it may not add extra players to the batting order if additional players arrive. A team may also not add a player in absentia to the order if it already has 10 players present.
- K. If a player must leave and no substitute is available, an out is recorded each time his place in the batting order is passed.
- L. If a team has eight players or less for any reason, they must forfeit.

### **3.02 PLAYING RULES**

- A. The home team is responsible for supplying bases (60 feet) and straight base lines. The base lines should include the runner's lane down the first base line. The pitching rubber must be secured to the ground at a distance of 46 feet. The umpires may suspend games if the home team does not supply proper field equipment.
- B. The home team must furnish a new ball for each game. The visiting team must provide a good used ball. The umpire may request additional balls if the others become lost or unusable. The umpire should keep the newest ball in play as much as possible. The pitcher may not request an older ball without valid reason.
- C. In regular season games, each team is responsible for paying one umpire.
- D. Team managers must have their starting lineup submitted to the opposing team at least five minutes before the start of the game.
- E. The "run-ahead" rule for the League shall be 12 runs after five innings. If losing, the designated home team shall have an equal number of at-bats as the winning visiting team. The "run-ahead" rule shall be in effect for all regular-season and playoff games.
- F. Any game that is shortened because of weather or darkness is an official game if the losing team has had at least five at-bats. If a team takes the lead in the top half of an inning and the game is then halted, the game shall be suspended at that point and resumed at a later date.

### **3.03            PROTESTED GAMES**

All protests must be reported to the League within **24 hours** of the completion of the protested games. Protests will only be accepted on the misinterpretation, omission or misapplication of a League or ASA rule, or the use of an ineligible player. The protesting manager must notify an umpire before the next pitch or play for a protest to be valid. (Exception: ineligible player). The umpire(s) must sign both scorebooks at that time.

### **3.04            DISCIPLINE**

Runners are not permitted to “bull over” a defensive player. Runners who do not slide and then initiate contact with a defensive player are subject to ejection. Vulgar swearing and unsportsmanlike conduct toward any player or umpire will not be tolerated.

Ejected players must leave the field/complex in a timely fashion or his team will forfeit the game. An ejection will also result in a two-game suspension. A player who is ejected from a second game during the season will receive a three-game suspension. Any player who is ejected three times in a season is suspended indefinitely. Suspended players must attend the games they are suspended for the suspension to be served.

If a player or manager makes any unsportsmanlike contact with an umpire, he shall be ejected from the game and suspended from league activity for one year. The offending player may also be subject to further sanction from the ASA.

If a player or manager is involved in a physical fight with an opposing player/manager, both are ejected and suspended for a minimum of three (3) games.

### **3.05            PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

Players must participate in at least seven (7) regular season games to be eligible to participate in the playoffs. League rosters must be submitted to the commissioners by June 9. Teams will forfeit any game played after that date if their League roster is not submitted.

Games that are forfeited or called due to rain do not count toward the seven-game minimum unless the umpire(s) sign both teams' scorebooks to verify the lineup. A game that is forfeited or called before the scheduled start time cannot be counted toward the seven-game minimum.

## **THE SCHEDULE**

### **4.01 SCHEDULE STRUCTURE**

- A. The League shall be divided into two divisions (American and National) each season. The previous season's won/lost records will determine divisional placement. American: 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> (12<sup>th</sup>). National: 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> (11<sup>th</sup>). The League may elect to use a one-division format on a year-to-year basis if a majority of the Executive Board votes in favor. In 2009, the League will use one 8-team division.
- B. Weekday games are not to be canceled. If a team cannot field nine eligible players on the day of a scheduled game, a forfeit is taken. Sunday games may be rescheduled if one team notifies the other at least five days ahead of time.
- C. If a game is postponed due to weather/field conditions, the managers have five days to establish a makeup date. If the managers cannot agree on a date, the League commissioners will select a date and time for the game.
- D. Games will be scheduled all days, except Fridays and Saturdays. Teams may play makeup games on Fridays, if desired. No team shall be required to play on a Friday or Saturday. In terms of League scheduling, Sunday shall be the "next day" after Thursday.

### **4.02 PLAYOFF STRUCTURE**

- A. The stepladder format will be used for each division, based on teams' regular season won/lost record until there are four teams remaining in each division (5<sup>th</sup> vs. 4<sup>th</sup>, loser eliminated, winner vs. first-place team in a best-of-3 series; 3<sup>rd</sup> vs. 2<sup>nd</sup> in a best-of-3). If the League uses a one-division format, the stepladder will be used to reduce the number of teams to eight (8<sup>th</sup> vs. 1<sup>st</sup> in a best-of-3, etc.) In 2009, the League will use one 8-team division.
- B. Each team shall furnish one new ball for their first playoff game. The League shall pay umpires for all remaining games and supply new softballs. All game balls are to be taken to the next game for use as backup balls.
- C. No team shall be forced to play three consecutive calendar days during the playoffs. Playoff games will not be played on Friday or Saturday.
- D. The higher-seeded team in each playoff game will be home team. In a series, the higher seed will be the home team in the first, third and fifth games. The lower seed will be the home team in the second and fourth games.

- E. The following tiebreaker system will be used for ties in playoff seeding, player drafting or division setup:
- a. Head-to-head competition
  - b. Matching wins tie-breaker (record against first-place team in League/division; record against second-place team, etc. until one team has a better record than the other). If tie cannot be broken, then proceed to coin toss.