

## 1. League Organization

- a. The governing body of this league is Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation.
- b. USA slow pitch rules govern league play except when superseded by the following rules and regulations.  
Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation reserves the right to rule on anything not covered in the USA rulebook.
- c. The league shall consist of the following divisions:
  - i. Men's
    1. Open Equalizer
    2. Recreational No Home Runs
    3. Recreational Equalizer
    4. Church Equalizer
    5. Modified Pitch Equalizer
  - ii. Coed
    1. Recreational Equalizer
    2. Open equalizer
  - iii. Mixed
    1. All mixed leagues will play men's equalizer rules with a minimum of two females participating at all times.
  - iv. ANY PLAYER THAT IS LISTED ON A SANCTIONED TOURNAMENT ROSTER IN THE CURRENT CALENDAR YEAR AND PARTICIPATES IN A RECREATION ONLY LEAGUE GAME WILL BE RESULT IN A FORFEIT IN ALL GAMES THE PLAYER PARTICIPATES IN.

- d. Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation recognizes the manager listed as having sole authority on team decisions including GCPR league play, GRPA District Tournaments, and GRPA State Tournaments. The manager's authority supersedes any concerns from sponsors and team players.
- e. Each team will be responsible for checking the website for rain out and make-up game information. We will post this information to the website as soon as it becomes available
- f. RAINOUT PHONE NUMBER: (770) 822-8882 (AFTER 4:30 PM).

## 2. Game Rules

- a. All teams must have at least six (6) players to start or continue a game.
  - i. If a team fails to field at least six (6) players at game time, that team shall forfeit the game.
  - ii. If neither team can field six (6) players at game time, it shall be ruled a double forfeit.
    - 1. If a team starts with six (6) players, or is playing with six (6) players, the 7th to 10th player may be added to the line-up at the time of arrival. The player or players must be added to the bottom of the batting order.
    - 2. If a team does not start the game with the extra player(s), he/she may not be added once the game has started.
    - 3. Pitcher and catcher positions must be occupied when playing in the field.
    - 4. If a player is removed from a game for any reason and the team has no substitutes, an out will not be charged for the removed persons turn at bat. Once removed, the player cannot re-enter the game.
      - a. Exception 1: If a player is removed from a game for unsportsmanlike or rowdy conduct, an out will be charged for the removed persons turn at bat if no legal substitute is available.
      - b. Exception 2: See coed rules starting on page 4. Remember no team is allowed to play with less than 6 players.
- b. Games will start at the scheduled time

- i. A ten (10) minute grace period is allowed only on the first game of the night. The grace period is considered as part of game time. However, if a team has six (6) players, the game will start immediately or as soon as the sixth (6th) player arrives.
  - ii. All players are expected to always hustle on and off the field.
  - iii. The pitcher shall have three (3) warm-up pitches, and the inning will start.
  - iv. The one-hour game time will be displayed on the scoreboard. If the scoreboard timer is not working, then it will be monitored by a digital clock provided by GCPRD. The game clock will start immediately following the pre-game instruction meeting at home plate between the umpires and team coaches.
  - v. Teams will not be allowed to swap game times or days with other teams. No exceptions will be made.
  - vi. Infield practice will be allowed before the 1<sup>st</sup> inning only AND only if it will not cause a delay in the scheduled starting time.
  - vii. Line-ups should be turned into the umpire 10 minutes prior to the start of each game. Continued violation will result in disciplinary action from probation to suspension.
- c. There is a one-hour time limit on each game.
- i. No new inning shall begin after this time has elapsed.
    1. If the game is tied AND time has expired, the game will continue for 2 innings in a 1-pitch format.
    2. If the game is still tied after 2 innings of the 1-pitch format, the last batter of the previous inning will start on 2<sup>nd</sup> base and play will continue in 1-pitch format until a winner is determined.
  - ii. Five (5) innings shall constitute an official game in the case of rainouts or four and one half (4 1/2) innings if the home team is ahead.
  - iii. If required regulation innings have not been played, the Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation will reschedule the game as soon as possible.

1. Any rescheduled game will resume from the exact point that the game was delayed or postponed.
  2. Rescheduled games may be on any day of the week including Saturdays and Sundays
- d. There will be a 10-run rule in effect for all games after five (5) innings or 4 1/2 if home team is ahead by ten runs, 12-run rule after 4 innings and 15-run rule after 3 innings.
  - e. A minimum of two (2) umpires will be assigned to every game. A game will be played if only one official is present.
  - f. All players can be listed in the batting order with unlimited defensive substitutions.
  - g. In case of league standing ties, winners will be determined by:
    - i. Head-to-head competition (margin of victory)
    - ii. Margin of victory against highest place team.
    - iii. If you have any questions concerning this rule, call the athletic office at 678.277. 0891.
  - h. Courtesy runners will be allowed.
    - i. The coach can pick any player to be the courtesy runner.
    - ii. If that courtesy runner comes up to bat in the batting order and he/she is still on base, it will be ruled an out for that at bat.
    - iii. In Coed, courtesy runner must be of the same gender.
  - i. An Infield Fly is a fair fly ball (not a line drive or bunt) that, in the judgment of the umpire, can be caught by an infielder, pitcher or catcher with ordinary effort when there are runners on:
    - i. First and second base **or** first, second, and third base **AND** less than 2 outs.
    - ii. The Infield fly only calls the batter out. It does NOT create a dead ball situation.
      1. Runners are allowed to advance at their own jeopardy the same as any other fly ball.
      2. Because the batter is out, there is no force out on the base runners, therefore they must be tagged out.
  - j. The team batting is responsible for balls hit outside of playing area.

k. The home team will be determined by the schedule on the website.

l. Co-Ed League ONLY:

i. There will be a 200-foot line in the outfield that the outfielders must remain behind while a female is at bat. The penalty for outfielders being over the line will be that all base runners will advance one base, and the batter will be awarded first base.

ii. A team cannot start a game with more men than women.

iii. Fielding Regulations:

1. A team must have one and only one male in the pitcher/catcher combination.

2. A maximum of two (2) male players are permitted in the infield.

3. A maximum of two (2) male players are permitted in the outfield.

4. NOTE: Male players are permitted to play side-by-side in the field

iv. Teams must arrange their batting order with at least one woman between each man. Male players cannot bat back-to-back.

v. EXTRA PLAYER(S): All players can be listed in the batting order with unlimited defensive substitutions., provided Rules 2 ,3, and 4 are followed.

vi. If a team does not start the game with extra player(s), he/she may not be added once the game has started.

vii. If starting a game with less than 10 players, no team may add players to their line-up causing more men than women on the field or in the batting order.

viii. If a female is removed from the game for any reason and this causes 2 men to bat back-to-back, a team will have three options:

1. Replace the outgoing female with a female substitute

2. Remove one male (must be male batting either before or after removed female)

3. If one male is not removed, receive one out for the removed female for each scheduled turn at bat.
  4. Note - if an additional female is removed from the game, options 1, 2, or 3 are repeated.
- m. The score of a forfeited game shall be seven to zero (7- 0) in favor of the team not at fault.
  - n. A player is considered participating in the ball game when the first legal pitch is thrown. This does not include warm-up pitches.
  - o. Equalizer Rule – A team cannot at any time be ahead in homeruns by more than one.
    - i. The first team to hit a homerun over the outfield fence cannot hit another one until the opposing team hits a homerun to tie or one more to go ahead by one home run
    - ii. Any homerun hit in excess is an out.
    - iii. The home team can hit all available homeruns in the seventh inning to tie or go ahead.
    - iv. The equalizer rule still applies if extra innings must be played.
  - p. Each batter will start off with a 1-1 pitch count.
  - q. If the game is tied AND the game time has expired, the game will go to a 1-pitch format.

### **3. Eligibility**

- a. Players must be 18 years of age prior to September 1st of the current year to be eligible for Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Division's league and to participate in G.R.P.A. District and State Tournaments.
- b. Each team must have a roster posted with the league coordinator prior to your first game of the season.
- c. Players not on roster are not eligible to play.
- d. No player additions to the roster are allowed after the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) scheduled game of the season
- e. Rosters on record at this time will be used as the rosters for ANY post season play
- f. Pick up players are allowed under the following conditions
  - i. The pickup players must be approved by the opposing coach at the pre-game meeting in front of the umpires

- ii. No team may pick up more than the 10<sup>th</sup> player (NO EXTRA HITTERS)
- iii. Pick up players must be at the bottom of the batting line-up
- iv. When a player from the team's roster arrives, they must IMMEDIATELY replace the pickup player
- v. Appeals regarding pickup players should be made to the umpire and field attendant immediately.

**This is NOT a protest.** Play will continue while ID and rosters are compared

1. No appeals for illegal players will be allowed after the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning

2. When a player is questioned,

a. The player in question must provide a valid ID

b. Acceptable forms of ID

i. Birth certificate, certified abstracts of birth, hospital birth records, notification of birth, notification of registration, certificate of registration, and regulation military identification cards, government ID from US Department of Immigration and Naturalization, passports, adoption records, notarized Correctional Institution records, or clearly processed and readable copies of such shall be considered and referred to as acceptable birth records for GRPA competition. Also, Georgia Department of Public Safety personal ID cards issued for check cashing, etc. are acceptable if date of birth is affixed.

ii. Driver's Licenses and Learner's Permits from any state shall be acceptable birth records for participants of the ages 15 and over, if the date of birth appears on the Driver's License or Learner's Permit.

iii. If a name change is involved which is different from the Acceptable Birth Records, a copy of the court order granting the name change must also be presented. An official written statement notarized by a notary public and approved by signature from a parent or guardian may be substituted if a copy of the court order cannot be obtained. Such a court order copy or an official notarized statement shall not be considered as

acceptable birth records, but only as evidence that the acceptable birth record presented is the true and accurate birth certificate, certified abstract of birth, hospital record, military identification or copy of such, etc.

c. The field attendant will compare the ID to the team's roster to determine if the player is legal

d. If the player is not on the team's roster, the game will be forfeited by the offending team

vi. The Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Division reserves the right to forfeit games when it discovers the use of ineligible players. This may be done with or without the benefit of an appeal.

vii. A player **cannot** be listed on more than one team's roster per league. Example: A player cannot be listed on two rosters for Bethesda Park Monday Night Men's Open Equalizer but can be listed on one roster for Bethesda Park Monday Night Men's Open Equalizer and Bethesda Park Monday Night Men's Recreational Only No Homerun.

1. Spring Season Only – If a player is listed on one or more rosters in a division (men's, Coed) during the spring season, that player must choose which team he/she will play for during the Charlie Blackburn Memorial tournament should both teams qualify

viii. New players may be added to team roster prior to the seventh (7) scheduled game. After the seventh game, all rosters are frozen. This roster will be your roster for the Charlie Blackburn Memorial Tournament at the end of spring season

ix. A manager wishing to add or release a player must adhere to the following procedures:

1. Obtain a drop/add form from the league Coordinator and fill out form in the following manner:
  - a. List players full name, address and phone number along with his signature at consent.
  - b. Both the releasing and adding manager must sign form in appropriate spaces.
  - c. Submit completed form to league coordinator.

- d. Added player will become eligible 24 hours after completed form has been properly completed and submitted to league coordinator.
- 2. Player may change teams only one (1) time.
- x. Church Men's Division:
  - 1. A church team is composed of members from one church.
  - 2. Church outreach programs are not eligible for the church division.
  - 3. All church rosters must be turned into the league office two weeks prior to the start of the season.
  - 4. Rosters will be sent to the church office for verification of membership.
  - 5. Exception: If several small churches would like to participate but cannot field a team due to shortage of participants, a letter from each church's minister can be sent to league office for approval. For questions concerning this rule call the athletic office at (678) 277-0891.

**4. Conduct**

- a. Each team is responsible for the conduct of its players and spectators. A team may be reprimanded, put on probation, suspended or face expulsion for any unsportsmanlike conduct by player(s), coach(s), or spectators. Gwinnett County reserves the right to deny eligibility for GRPA competitions for poor conduct/sportsmanship.
- b. NO SMOKING or VAPING in Gwinnett County Parks. This includes fields, dugouts, parking lot or any Gwinnett County property. Disciplinary action may result in probation to suspension.
- c. Alcoholic beverages and intoxicants are prohibited. Disciplinary action will result in reprimand to expulsion.
- d. Profanity, unsportsmanlike conduct, and verbal or physical abuse will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action will be a minimum of a 3-game suspension.
- e. Any player, spectator, or manager at the request of any official or league coordinator, must leave the "premises". Failure to do so may result in suspension and forfeiture.

- f. No participant may touch an umpire or league official in anger or threaten to do him bodily harm. Disciplinary action will result in expulsion.
- g. A minimum penalty for any player expelled from a game because of unsportsmanlike or rowdy conduct will be suspension for the next 3 league games in which his/her team plays, including playoff and tournament games.
  - i. On a player's second offense, the player is suspended for the season in which his team plays.
  - ii. Third offenses shall result in automatic expulsion from the program for a calendar year.
- h. The manager is the only person authorized to discuss rule interpretation with the umpire.
- i. The Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Division reserves the right to suspend any or all players, coaches and managers for unbecoming conduct either before, during or after a game.

## 5. Uniforms and Equipment

- a. ALL bats must be approved by USA and pass a compression test performed by GCPR staff. Once a bat passes, a sticker will be placed on the bat to indicate that the bat meets USA standards. A current list of all USA legal and illegal bats can be found at <https://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/certified-equipment> and on a link on the home page at <https://www.quickscores.com/gcaa>
- b. We strongly recommend all team players wear shirts similar in color.
- c. Players are REQUIRED to have a non-duplicating number on front or back of each shirt. Each number must be visible by the umpires and scorekeeper.
- d. Jersey numbers must be permanently attached (no taped numbers – markers or ink are acceptable). Failure to comply with this rule will result in immediate removal from the game.
- e. IMPORTANT: All teams participating in GRPA District and State Tournaments are required to wear shirts similar in color with non-duplicating numbers on front or back (no ink or taped numbers). NO EXCEPTIONS.
- f. Athletic type shoes are mandatory. No metal cleats.
- g. Balls shall be yellow:
  - i. .52 COR with a compression rating no greater than 300 must be visibly seen on softball.)

- ii. Each team must furnish one new 12-inch ball per game.
- iii. Teams must hit first available ball, there is no rule stating a team will hit their own ball.
- iv. Any additional softballs used the game must be an approved softball for league competition by the opposing pitcher or umpire before they can be used in the game.

## **6. Protest**

- a. Protest shall not be allowed on any judgment call.
- b. If a protest concerning misinterpretation of playing rules is to be made, it must be made following the designated procedure:
  - i. Manager calls time out and notifies the official and scorer. Protest must be made at point of infraction and prior to the next pitch (legal or illegal).
  - ii. Submit a written protest with the required protest fee of \$100.00 per protest to the Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Division league coordinator within 24 hours (excluding weekends).
  - iii. Each protest must outline the events as they transpired and must cite specific rules, sections and sub-sections to bear out the protest.
- c. If a protest on rule misinterpretation is made on the last play of the game, it must be made to the umpires before they leave live ball territory, and the game is called. A called game is a game ended by the umpires.
- d. When a protest is upheld, the protest fee will be returned. If the protest is not upheld, the protest fee will be forfeited.

## **7. Post Season Play – Spring Season ONLY**

- a. The top two places in each league will advance to Charlie Blackburn County Tournament.
- b. The divisions will be Men's, Coed, Church, Modified and Mixed
- c. All divisions will play under equalizer rules
- d. The county tournaments will be held in late May.

**8. Guidelines for GRPA Tournaments**

- a. All teams that participate in Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation local leagues are eligible to participate in GRPA district and state tournaments.
- b. All teams must pay all entry fees and travel expenses associated with GRPA competitions.
- c. Contact league office for further information on GRPA tournaments.

**9. Field Dimensions**

- a. Distance between bases-70 ft
- b. Distance to fence-300 ft
- c. Pitcher's mound – 50-55 ft