

PebbleCreek Senior Softball Association

Rating Systems

including Guidelines for Evaluation of New and Returning Players

(This document supersedes "Evaluation Committee Guidelines/Charter

dated September 23, 2019)

Authority

The PebbleCreek Senior Softball Association is governed by an Executive Committee (under PCSSA Bylaws as Amended April 17, 2023, Section 2.1) and is commonly referred to as the PCSSA Board. The PCSSA Board, in recognition of the Association's rapid growth and breadth of capability in its membership has created a multi- league organization. Teams are drafted into leagues of roughly equal levels of capability. These levels define teams with highly rated players, moderately rated players and lower rated players.

The PCSSA Board has surveyed its membership and reviewed its past approach to how it rates its player capabilities and how it communicates that approach with its results back to the PCSSA community. By this document, the PCSSA Board establishes its process for improving its management and documentation of a PCSSA Rating System. The PCSSA Board authorizes the Director of Player Personnel to document and manage the methodology and schedule for the use of the PCSSA Rating System. The DLP reports to the PCSSA President and PCSSA Board has approval authority for Rating System publications.

Documentation shall include maintenance of a Player Rating List for each year, a Player Draft List to support each league draft process, a Guideline for Evaluation for New and Returning Players (based on Board defined evaluation requirements), a Ratings Rubric for evaluation, an Evaluation List of New and Returning Players, a list of current and potential evaluation committee membership, Team Rosters (post draft) with player ratings, List of Substitute Players, a schedule for evaluations, and a schedule for reporting and publishing each list.

The methodology for managing the PCSSA Rating System shall include the formation and oversight of an Evaluation Committee for each PCSSA Operating Year (fiscal year beginning July 1 of each year) and the ongoing communication with Team managers about accuracy and validity of current player ratings. Management of the Rating System will be consistent with league requirements for their seasonal drafts (Fall/Winter and Spring) as developed by the PCSSA Vice President and will compliment all PCSSA Rules and Policies as approved by the PCSSA Board.

(For changes made to this document after its approval, a change log will be added as Attachment 1).

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Introduction

As directed by the PCSSA Board, the principal goal of this document is to provide the PCSSA with an objective and transparent rating system that is used to assign a numerical value to all playing members based on their skills for offensive play (batting and base running) and defensive play (infield and outfield).

The second goal is to establish the management responsibilities for the Rating System, including its evaluation process, the reporting and communication process for pre-draft decisions with managers and players and the utilization of ratings during seasonal play, such as supporting Board management of the *PCSSA Rules (substitute players, for example)*.

Objective

The objective of this document is to describe the PCSSA Rating System and define how the PCSSA Board uses the Rating System to evaluate new and returning players to establish their numerical rating for each Operating Year (referred to as season, hereafter). The Rating System is important to many other league operations such as drafting of teams, managing in-season substitution rules, and player replacements.

The Rating System

Central to the rating system is a Rating Rubric (Attachment 2). This rubric is used exclusively for initial evaluation of new players (registering for the first-time in PCSSA). When used properly it is a means for experienced (or trained) evaluators to objectively grade the skill level of new players.

The rubric breaks down a player's skill into three categories, two offensive and one defensive - batting and base running competencies are evaluated as tests of offensive ability while defensive ability is evaluated by assessing infield and outfield competencies. Each of the competency areas can be assessed separately and numerically scored based on the assessment of evaluators using the ratings rubric.

Please refer to Attachment 2 PCSSA Ratings Rubric 2024 to complement the following sections.

BATTING Batting competency is assessed by observing a batter's power and consistency of hits. During an evaluation each player will have at least two sets of 10 to 20 swings. Use of a skilled pitcher is preferred in these evaluations.

Power of hits is generally the first to be assessed by evaluators. The standard for scoring is made by observing the distance a batted ball travels in the air or on the ground. When evaluating at the PC Field of Dreams, well hit balls seen to go over or get to the fence as most powerful (column 5 on the rubric), followed by flying to the second or first set of sprinklers (column 4 and 3) and finally whether hits travel beyond the infield (column 2). Power is determined regardless of whether the ball may be fielded in real game play. However, an evaluator may observe that time of flight, such as consistent pop flies or slow rollers, could be a factor in adjusting a score and should note that on the form.

Consistency of hits is assessed next. (Note: this assessment does not consider whether a well hit ball would result in a batter/runner getting to base. It is an assessment the evaluator must

estimate based on percentage of solid contacts made for the number of swings taken. Solid contact is a judgement made by each evaluator. In addition, an evaluator may take into account their observation of a batter's swing mechanics (stance, grip, body positioning, rotation, wrist action, footwork, etc.) This allows for an assessment that may add to the pure mathematics of hitting percentage. Hitting to different fields, natural talent but out-of-practice timing, potential for improvement with practice, and other factors should be noted as evaluator considerations.

Batting score using the rubric form looks up from the observed power level of hits to the consistency level (and considering additive factors) to find a total score for batting. Batting score will range from one to fifteen.

DEFENSE In our defensive assessments, players are first observed playing infield and then outfield positions. Evaluators assess how well they can catch balls and throw them. During an evaluation each player will have a chance to field 10-12 ground balls hit from home plate for infield evaluation and up to 10 fly balls hit from the left or right of home plate (depending on sun angle) for outfield evaluation. Use of a skilled batter is preferred for these evaluations.

For infield, they will start at the Short Stop position (or may elect to play from Second Base position) to catch ground balls and throw them to first base. (Use of league basemen are preferred, otherwise rotate new players in to catch at first.)

The evaluator scores the player using the rating rubric description and their assessment on how well they move to catch the ball and then throwing mechanics to first. This is scored from 2 to 10 (vertical column).

For outfield, they will start at a position between the first and second set of outfield sprinklers. The player's range, tracking, positioning and form when catching the ball and the ability to throw to second base will be assessed.

In this phase of the evaluation, the evaluator will assess whether the player has additional fielding strengths to play outfield and how well. Using the rubric matrix for Defense, the evaluator will then adjust the Infield score by using columns for plus, plus-plus or none (indicating outfield is not a strength). Defense scoring will range from two to ten.

BASE RUNNING

Base running assessment is about observing a player's control, gait and base running technique. While base running speed and agility are valuable to see, players are instructed to run smartly and avoid injury. This practice has been established after years of lessons learned from seeing too many players going all out without appropriate conditioning and suffering significant injuries.

Each player is instructed to run to second base starting from the batter's box. The evaluators will be assessing the player's acceleration from the batter's box heading towards first base. Here, they will analyze body and head position while accelerating and maintaining a situational awareness around themselves. Arms, legs and feet positioning are studied for synchronization as they maintain stability and control on their way to first. Then, evaluators watch for the runner's ability to

plan for an efficient turn at first, hitting the inside corner of first, completing the turn and then sustaining a direct route to second and safely stopping.

An evaluator's scoring should break their assessment into these two phases of the run and weigh running to first more important than the turn and run to second. Scores of one to five are assessed on the run to first considering the criteria above. Then, the evaluator will consider the turn and run to second and being worse than expected, about the same or better than expected and use the -1, 0, or +1 column to adjust the run to first score for a total base running score. Base running score will range between one and five.

Total player scores can be summed by adding each of the three category scores with a maximum of 15 points allocated to batting, 5 points maximum allocated to base running and 10 points maximum allocated to defense. A player's rating may then be assigned as equaling that total score, except in certain circumstances. While a maximum score is 30 points is possible, it has been past practice to limit the highest rating to 28 and the lowest rating to be 10 regardless of scores. As such, all active players are rated in the 18-point range from 10 to 28. Different from past practice, the Board will begin documenting the exceptions where rating does not equal evaluation score totals.

The emphasis on offensive ability (20 out of 30 possible points) is intentional and intended to promote a more exciting playing environment as expected in a recreational league.

Changes to the Rating System

When the Board deems it necessary to change the Rating System, the Director of League Personnel will make recommendations to the Board on how to make and document the changes. Changes to the Rating System may encompass the ratings rubric, the evaluation process or the utilization of ratings. These changes will be approved by the Board (with any modifications) prior to their use.

The DLP will be responsible for communicating changes made to the Rating System. These communications will be made immediately to the PCSSA Team Managers and then the PCSSA community at large.

Use of the Rating System

The rating system (ratings) is used by the PCSSA Board to define the skill levels of all players (and player/managers). This data informs the Board of the distribution of its players and allows for analysis leading potentially to many decisions including, but not limited to:

- what number of teams to be planned for each of three leagues, leading to
- number of team managers to be designated
- initial draft order of team managers
- continuing draft order for each draft round (sum of player ratings on the roster)
- limitations on self-election of league choice
- establishing ghost slots for placement into the draft (with rating)
- substitution rules
- replacing team vacancies

- continual assessment of individual rating during the season to guard against team imbalance (addressing opposing manager complaints)
- addressing individual member concerns about fairness and equality in the league, life, universe and other places.

The various uses of the Rating System can be organized into three periods that occur during a season, the evaluation process, in-season player substitutions and filling player vacancies or long-term absences.

Evaluation Process

Preparation for pre-season draft

Each year, evaluation schedules are driven by the Draft Day schedule. Usually, pre-season evaluations are scheduled to be concluded and reported at least two days before the first Draft Day. This gives sufficient time for the Player Lists to be compiled, approved by the Board and sent to the team managers.

The number of pre-season evaluation days are driven by the number of new players and returning players needing to be evaluated, the availability of evaluators and availability of players to be evaluated. The number of evaluation slots planned will be twice the number of players to be evaluated. It is preferred that each day of evaluation is conducted in the morning hours to limit exposure to extreme heat.

The DLP will coordinate between the Board and an Evaluation Committee (see Attachment 3) to schedule evaluations for the number of new and/or returning players that the Board has identified through registration or other means. These evaluations shall occur at least the week prior to the draft.

Late registrations that cannot be scheduled before the draft will be scheduled after the draft is complete. The PCSSA Board will set timeframes for these evaluations based on league/team needs and may place these players on teams (filling ghost positions at equivalent ratings) or placed onto the Substitution List.

Registrations occurring after the season has started will be scheduled for evaluation by mid-month following the registration as directed by the Board.

Unscheduled evaluations can be directed by the PCSSA Board to re-assess players whose play is consistently well beyond their listed rating. (i.e., seemingly more than one rating point by comparison) with their peers of the same rating. An overwhelming advantage to those who gain them as a substitute. This re-assessment will be conducted by a meeting of the Evaluation Committee. The Chair will document the evaluation committee's assessment by adjusting the player's scores for hitting, base running, and/or defense scores. This document will be recorded with the DLP who shall present it to the Board for approval. The Board shall also make a decision on when the new rating will become effective.

During any meeting of the Evaluation Committee...

New players

First time registrants to PCSSA are considered new players. All evaluator scores for each skill category (hitting, defense, and base running) will be averaged by the Chair after dropping significant outlying scores (high and/or low). The sum of all three scores will be the basis and total score for a new player. The total score may become the new player's rating with some exceptions as described below.

Subjective assessment by evaluators can influence the final rating given in two cases. First, if most evaluators believe the player being evaluated has shown potential for a higher rating because they have shown better than average physicality and knowledge of baseball/softball skills. Second, when a player shows up at the evaluation without proper gear or has an injury (temporary in nature) that inhibits their ability on the scheduled evaluation day. These temporary ratings may be given to establish a new player rating for a draft and when there will not be sufficient time to have a new evaluation ahead of the draft.

Two evaluation days per new player should be the standard. This should alleviate the need for subjective assessments by allowing some time for a second look at each new player.

Returning players

The PCSSA Board will assess all registered returning players (from previous year) prior to scheduling pre-draft evaluations. This assessment will be based on the returning player registering and the Board seeking any known information about their status such as recent surgeries and past injuries that are likely to affect their rating. The Board will request information from within the PCSSA and direct the available evaluators to add their recommendations for who among the returning players should be scheduled for evaluation.

Additionally, returning players who have been absent from the league for more than a year will be considered for pre-draft evaluation. Ultimately, the Board will have the authority to request any returning player be evaluated if it is determined in the best interest of the league.

All returning players not needing to be re-evaluated are added to the draft list per their requested league (within Board rating restrictions).

Official reporting of ratings

All ratings assigned by evaluators will be sent to the Director of League Personnel who will compile them into the Player list of returning players. The total list will be approved by the PCSSA Board. The DLP will then create an AL draft list (based on player requests and Board approval) and send by email to AL managers prior to their email draft round.

Similarly, after the AL draft is completed, the DLP will add those players not drafted (and agreeing) to the MAL draft list (based on player requests and Board approval). This list will be sent to MAL managers prior to their email draft round.) Repeat this for the NL.

The player draft list published by the DLP for each league are the official listings and ratings.

Managing the Evaluation Process

The rating system (ratings) is constantly discussed and debated throughout the year. It brings the PCSSA community together as well as dividing them. Who manages the rating system and how it's used is debated often and most misunderstood. In the past, only the guidelines of the Evaluation Committee were documented. This section of the Rating System will further clarify and amplify the total management of the evaluation process which includes the PCSSA Board, an Evaluation Committee selected by the Board, and Team Managers.

PCSSA Board Responsibilities

The PCSSA Board has the ultimate authority over the evaluation process. The Board member who has principal responsibility to overseeing and documenting the activities and results of the evaluation process is the Director for League Personnel (DLP).

The DLP will present all new and returning player ratings to the Board for approval prior to distribution. This includes pre-draft material and in-season changes to the player list(s).

The Board will develop a list of potential evaluators for an Evaluation Committee. The DLP will maintain the list and assure the Board that training has been provided on the Rating System. PCSSA membership who express interest in Evaluation Committee work will be reviewed with the PCSSA Board and some will interview for experience, be provided training on the PCSSA Rating System and rating rubric and potentially recommended for internship with the evaluation committee. Those selected by the Board will be placed on a list after the President, Vice President or DLP have approved their qualifications. The list will be sustained and transferred to each successive Board.

The DLP will directly interface with the Evaluation Committee Chairman to develop a list of registered players requiring evaluation, help set a schedule for the evaluations and receive evaluation ratings recommendations from the Evaluation Committee.

The DLP will frequently consult with Team Managers for their ongoing sense of player ratings to identify potential player re-evaluations that may be needed.

The Board may call for unscheduled Evaluation Committee reviews, investigations, or aid in Rating System corrective measures at any time.

The PCSSA President has approval authority of the Evaluation Committee membership and its chairman and may elect to replace any member or Chair at any time. Interim Chair or members may be placed by the President until replacements are approved by the Board. This should occur within 31 days.

Evaluation Committee Responsibilities

PCSSA Board requires the assistance of a committee to support the management of its Rating System to include 1) scheduling and conducting evaluations of newly registered players and returning players as identified and recommended by the Board, 2) conducting routine evaluations during the season to assess significant changes in player's abilities (such as playing much better or

worse over time from their rating) and 3) supporting the continuing documentation requirements for the Rating System.

Annually, the Board will approve guidelines and committee membership to support the PCSSA Rating System evaluation of new and returning players.

Guidelines for the Evaluation Committee are at Attachment 3 of this document.

A secondary need in support of the Board is in encouraging and recruiting future PCSSA members to become evaluators. Members of the Evaluation Committee are uniquely situated to be able to identify and talk to other members in PCSSA about the value and satisfaction in being a part of the league Rating System.

If there is insufficient experience to create a pool of potential evaluators, the Committee should develop a training program for evaluators as a path for those interested but lack the experience currently.

Responding to calls for documentation from the Board to support and substantiate player ratings is a priority.

Team Managers Responsibilities

Ongoing evaluation and validation of all league players within a league are an inherent responsibility of each team manager. Team Managers should frequently consult with the DLP (or other Board members) to share insights into player performance on their team or across other teams in their league. These expectations will be communicated at each Manager meeting.

Besides supporting playing strategy formulation for their individual team, sharing this information with the Board can benefit the league by leading into improvements to the evaluation process.

Documentation and Reporting

The Director of League Personnel will develop and maintain a documentation system that supports current and future Rating System needs. Maintaining records of all player ratings is important as the league grows and as players leave and come back later.

Documents are also important in recording analysis and decisions on ratings made by the Board and its Evaluation Committee.

The DLP will file and post official Rating System reports to support Board approved activities and to inform the PCSSA community.

Membership to the Evaluation Committee is updated annually and contained in Attachment 4.

ATTACHMENT 1 – Change Log

Date logged	Subject
August 19, 2024	Initial Document Approved

ATTACHMENT 2 – Rating Rubric (Updated 8/2024)

PCSSA Ratings Rubric 2024

PLAYER:

Date of EVALUATION

EVALUATOR

BATTING						
CONSISTENCY (%)	100	12	13	14	15	NOTES:
	90	11	12	13		
	80	10	11		14	
	70	9		12		
	60	8	10		13	
	50	7		11		
	40	6	9		12	
	30	5		10		
	20	4	8		11	
	0	2	3	4	5	
	POWER					

DEFENSE					
INFIELD	10	10	10	10	NOTES:
	9	9	10	10	
	8	8	9	10	
	7	7	8	9	
	6	6	7	8	
	5	5	6	7	
	4	4	5	6	
	3	3	4		
	2	2			
	1	0	+	++	
	OUTFIELD				

- 5 - HOME RUN POWER - Deep Threat to or over the fence
- 4 - HARD HITTER - Hard hits over infield to or beyond 2nd sprinklers
- 3 - GOOD HITTER - powers through infield and/or flies to or beyond 1st sprinklers, but not pop flies
- 2 - FAIR HITTER - can occasionally get through or just over the infield

CONSISTENCY = how often do they make **solid contact** between bat and ball (%)

The evaluators assess how well the player positions themselves to **catch the ball (6pts)** = (side-to-side and fore-aft motions while tracking the ball, planting their feet, and glove positioning), then **throw the ball (4pts)** = transferring the ball from glove to throwing hand and the throwing motion (planting the back foot, hip and shoulder position, quickness of release, distance and accuracy). For this evaluation, the evaluator(s) may ask the evaluation batter to vary the direction of the HIT and/or HIT THE BALL HARDER to further challenge the fielder.

- ++ = the fielder has GREAT outfield skills as well
- + = the fielder has GOOD outfield skills as well

BASE RUNNING					
Home to First	5	4	5	5	NOTES:
	4	3	4	5	
	3	2	3	4	
	2	1	2	3	
	1	0	1	2	
		-1	0	1	

The Turn and Run to Second

Home to First = rate (3pts) proper body position and control in accelerating out of the box and getting to a controlled speed with arm and legs synchronized for balance. Head and body position.

The Turn and Run to Second = technique (2pts). Creating an efficient turn before (3-4 steps) from the right of first base, leaning the body and planting foot on edge/tip of bag to push off, then sustaining a direct route to second and stopping without losing balance

Hits		Throws	
LH	RH	LH	RH

- Age:
- Prior experience:
- Natural Ability:
- Potential for improvement:

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: (Evaluator / Manager)

SCORES:

BATTING	FIELDING	BASE RUN

RATING:

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Applicable to All PCSSA Leagues - American, Mid-American and National

ATTACHMENT 3 – Evaluation Committee Guidelines

The committee will consist of eight evaluators of which one will serve as chairman. The membership of this committee will be representative of the PCSSA with three members drawn from the American League, three members for the Mid-American and two members from the National League.

The Committee will serve the Board by conducting new and returning player evaluations and assessments for the purpose of establishing a listing of player ratings. These listings should meet the time requirements set up for each season draft or at other times as directed. Player ratings will be derived by using the PCSSA Rating System.

The committee will provide all documentation to the Director of League Personnel (DLP). These documents will be used to obtain Board approval of Ratings and PCSSA record keeping. The Committee Chair may request copies of PCSSA records of player listings for use in Committee work.

Membership of the Evaluation Committee –

The President will appoint each member of the Evaluation Committee from the Board approved list of potential PCSSA evaluators. From the membership of the Evaluation Committee, the President will appoint a chairman after deliberation with the Board.

The responsibility of the Chairman is to lead the Eval Committee in scheduling, supervising and filing results of evaluations of new and returning players. For scheduling, the Chair will consult with the DLP on the number of players needing evaluation and the timeframes necessary to have them completed. The Chairman will then seek to schedule all new and returning players identified for evaluations. Seeking assistance from the DLP and other Committee members in making these contacts will be likely as the period between registration closing and the evaluation dates may require it.

The Chair will then develop an evaluation order for each evaluation day and call the Eval Committee to be present for the evaluations. A majority of the Committee should be present for the evaluations. The Chair shall request the DLP to inform all managers of the evaluation schedule.

The Chair will lead the Committee assessment to establishing scores for each player evaluated. An approach to determining player scores is to average all evaluators scores for each skill category. Result will be average score for Batting, average score for Defense, and average score for Base Running. The Chair will then sum each of the average scores to create an initial Rating. The Chair will collect all evaluator sheets and his sheet with the recommended Rating. These documents will be delivered to the DLP for Board approval of Rating(s) and record keeping.

In addition to evaluations at the field of new and (some) returning players, the Chairman will schedule a meeting of the Evaluation Committee to review all other returning player ratings. The

DLP may be present to help guide the mechanics of the discussion and assure the Board the process has been correctly followed. The DLP is not providing input to the Ratings discussion.

Unscheduled evaluations may be called as needed each season. To address this, a secondary assessment schedule will be established for fourth week of the season. This day will be announced after the start of the season and Team Managers will be encouraged to suggest players to be re-rated from any team in the League. The Board will consult with the Evaluation Committee Chair so that the Chair can alert the Committee on players to be watched ahead of the scheduled re-rating assessment.

During any meeting of the Evaluation Committee where a player's scores or rating is discussed, the PCSSA President, Vice President and DLP will be invited. Their role is to observe and be assured the mechanics of the process are followed and to observe the committee member interactions. The Board members present are not to provide any input into the scoring and rating discussion of an individual player.

During any meeting when a player's (or spouse's) scores or rating is under review and they are present, the Chair of the meeting will excuse that player (or spouse) to temporarily leave the meeting. The meeting will not continue until they have left the room.

The Chair will collect all evaluator scores and include them in a digital report summarizing the new and returning player ratings. The Chair may request copies of the evaluator scores from the DLP.

While no strict Evaluation Committee member requirements are detailed, it has been noted that evaluators should have a high level of experience. This experience includes known engagement and observation at the field with the intention of assessing players relative to their ratings (over time). Or if insufficient experience is limiting the pool of potential evaluators, completing a training program for evaluators and a probationary period of assessment can become a path for those interested.

Members of the Committee must be familiar with the Rating System and its uses.

Members of the Committee are expected to participate in all scheduled evaluations and meetings called by the Chairman. If at any time a member wishes to depart the Committee, they must request it of the DLP or other PCSSA Board member.

Term of membership is approved by the Board annually and may not exceed 3 years with acceptable performance. Repeat membership is permitted after at least one year off the Committee. The staggering of members' terms is to be encouraged.

ATTACHMENT 4 – EVALUATION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (2024 – 2025)

Chairman Emeritus – Paul Zuckerbrow (AL)

Chairman-Designee: Mike Comstock (AL Rep 1)

AL Rep 2: Mark Pollack

AL Rep 3: Bill Wise

MAL Rep 1: Bobby Wengert*

MAL Rep 2: Ted Thompson*

MAL Rep 3: Thom Zemke*

NL Rep 1: Dawn Hangen*

NL Rep 2: Lynn Bartol*

NOTE 1: Chairman – Emeritus will remain available in support of the 2024 pre-draft Evaluations.

Chairman – Elect will transition immediately into Chairman position at that time after the drafts.

NOTE 2: 2023 – 2024 Membership previously included: Bob Pahl (MAL), Rich Christiansen (MAL), Terry Franchimone, (AL), and Howard Locker (AL).

Board Policy is for Board members to relinquish Committee assignments (Pahl and Christiansen will step down after 2024 evaluations completed).

AL was determined to have too many representatives. Franchimone and Locker will be remanded back to the Board’s list of potential evaluators for the Committee.

All terms begin this year as Year 1 of Membership and will follow annual term approval and term limits as dictated in the Evaluation Committee Guidelines.

*- requires Board approval and invitation (with training)