



SunCity Summerlin Softball Club

2026-2027 Playing Rules

Updated August 23, 2026

Basic Rules. The Club's fundamental playing rules are published in the **Senior Softball - USA Rulebook (Ed. 2024-25)**. The rulebook may be found on the SSUSA website - www.seniorsoftball.com (Tournaments/Rules). They are also on our club website at www.scssoftball.club. These rules govern league play unless modified by your Club Board, its Commissioners, and their Managers.

Rules and Draft Committee. A Committee for each league shall be appointed by the Club Board to recommend rule changes and develop team rosters for the coming season. The Committees shall consist of the appointed league commissioners and their respective managers. Commissioner may invite additional members if deemed necessary or helpful to the process. The Committees shall develop rules and rosters along a timeline established by the Club Board to ensure adequate time to properly inform Club members of their league and team placement, order uniforms, publish the Club Directory, and develop the playing schedule. The Committee's proposed rule changes and team rosters will be submitted to the Board for review and approval prior to release to the Club membership. The fundamental goal of these committees is to develop clear, appropriate rules and to achieve team parity across each league.

Modifications. Below are modifications that apply to each league, followed by league rules that apply only to that specific league. Once common and league playing rules are adopted by your Board, it is expected that changes will be an **exception**, considered only in **rare circumstances**, and only after a unanimous recommendation by the league commissioners and all managers. At the end of the first half, rule changes may be considered for the second half.

Common Rules for Each League

Schedule. The season schedule will run approximately September to May. A typical week will seek to have each team play two games, although schedule realities (# teams & playing days each week) may result in some teams only playing once in a particular week. At the end of the season, the Board will announce the playoff or post-season schedule for each league. There will be a break during the holiday seasons in November and December/January as announced by the Board. There may be special competitions (tournaments, all-star games, etc.) scheduled during the breaks for available players.

Substitute Players. Each league took extraordinary measures to achieve parity among their teams. Accordingly, it is incumbent upon each manager to respect that process and NOT attempt to improve their team through substitution. As a general and expected practice, Managers may only use players of equal or lesser skill level than the player(s) they are missing. Commissioners will monitor substitutions and intervene when they determine this intention is being abused and take appropriate action.

Umpires. Scheduled games will be officiated by two umpires from the “bye” teams per schedule established by the Commissioners in consultation with the leagues’ head umpires, unless other arrangements have been made. Head umpires will be appointed by Commissioners for their respective leagues. Managers are responsible for assigning their players to umpire their team’s assigned games. It is expected that assigned umpires will arrange for their substitute umpire if they cannot make their game. If less than two umpires show up for a game, the playing Managers will determine how to officiate the game. The Club will conduct a pre-season clinic for prospective umpires and conduct follow-on sessions as necessary during the season.

Time Limit. Each game will be on the 65-minute scoreboard clock. Upon time expiring, the inning in progress will be completed and the next inning shall be declared the “open inning.” The clock shall be stopped only in the event of an injury or safety situation and upon direction of the home plate umpire. The time limit may be waived for the final game of the day upon agreement by both managers.

Flip-Flop/Mercy. If at the end of the inning prior to the open inning, the home team is behind by 10 or more runs, the umpire will implement the flip-flop rule with the home team batting again. If the home team ties or goes ahead after their at bat, the visiting team will take its turn at bat to determine the outcome. There shall be no “mercy” rule; however, managers may conclude any game that both agree has “gotten out of hand.”

Protests. Judgement calls by umpires are not eligible to be protested by managers. Only errors in interpretation or application of established rules will be considered. All protests shall be resolved on the field during a suspension of play (clock stops) before play continues. If both managers agree that a “protestable” call was incorrect, the home plate umpire will correct the call. If both managers do NOT agree, then the call will be decided by the umpires after consultation. Their judgement will be final and the game will continue.

Minimum Players. Teams must have a minimum of their own rostered players to begin a game. All leagues have mandated a minimum of 9 players (combination of Roster Players and Subs) to constitute a Legal Roster. Each league has designated their own requirements on the number of Substitutes allowed.

Make-Up Games. Postponed games will be made up within 2 weeks following the week the games were scheduled. Any games not made up within that time frame may be declared a tie game or simply not counted in the standings. Exceptions must be approved by the respective league Commissioners. For games not played due to a tournament, the Commissioner and managers will determine if and how to schedule make-up games.

Early Departure. If a player has to leave a game for any reason (injury, appointment, etc.) approved by their manager, their place in the batting order will be skipped and will not be an out. Players leaving may not re-enter the game. If departure(s) bring a team below the Minimum allowed nine (9) players, then the Managers will determine how to continue play by supplementing the short team with a catcher or another position player.

New Players. All new or returning players who seek to play after the leagues conduct their drafts and teams are formed will be placed in a “pool” to be assigned to a team at the next opportunity. New players will be assigned to play up to 3 games in the National League to be evaluated for proper league and team placement. The Rules and Draft Committee will assign new players according to the Club’s needs.

Quitting. If a player declares their intent to quit during the season, their Manager and Commissioner will confirm this intention and inform the Club Board. The Board will review the request and inform the player in writing of their voluntary withdrawal for the remainder of the season.

Home Team Dugout. The home team will occupy the First base dugout to mirror the “Home” on the scoreboard. The visiting team will have the Third base dugout.

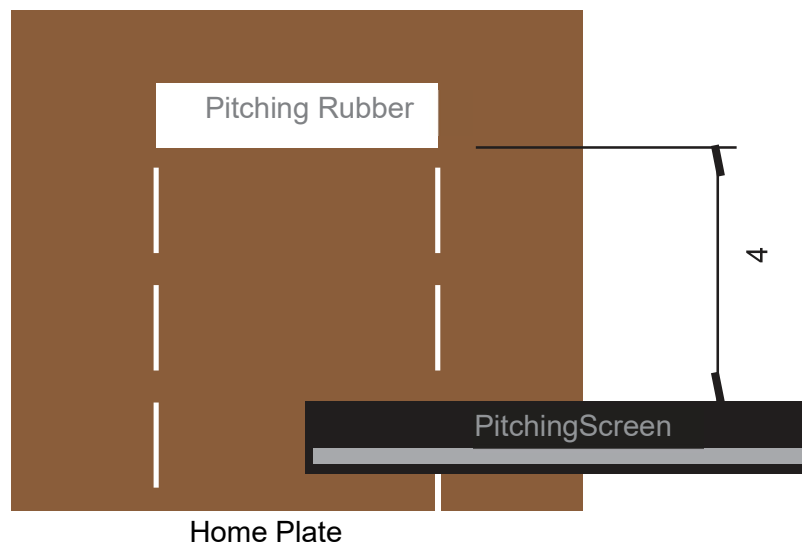
Field Preparation and Security. The home team for the first game will set up the field for play, including the pitching screen, scoreboard controls, warm-up balls, etc. The home team for the final game shall secure the field and return all equipment to the shed with special attention to not damaging the scoreboard control antenna.

Smoking. Smoking is prohibited within all Sun City facilities (SCSCAI Rules and Regulations Article IV.A.1). For the Pinnacle Field, the Club Board has designated the playing field within the perimeter fence, both dugouts, the stands, the walking track, and the restrooms as part of our facility. Smoking is not permitted within 50 feet of any part of this combined facility. Smokers should move to the parking lot before, during, and after games if they wish to smoke. Vaping and smokeless tobacco are included in this rule.

Turf Care. Any activity that may damage the artificial and natural turf is not allowed. This includes inappropriate disposal of chewing gum, sunflower seeds, and smokeless tobacco, which is not allowed per rule above.

Mask. All pitchers must **wear a mask** when pitching. Shin guards are highly recommended, though not required.

Pitching Screen. The pitching screen shall be used by **all pitchers**. The screen shall be placed 4 feet in front of the forward pitching line and its right edge (facing home plate) centered on the front pitching plate. Reverse for a left-handed pitcher. A batted ball contacting any part of the pitching screen will be called a “dead ball” (not a strike). There is no limit to the number of times a batter may hit a “dead ball” into the screen. If the pitcher touches a batted ball before it contacts the screen, the ball is in play.



A thrown ball hitting the pitching screen from the field is considered a live ball unless the ball gets trapped in the screen (or multiple balls come out), then it will be declared a dead ball, and runners advance only to the next base.

Foul Tip. Any foul tip ball caught is considered a fly out. The ball does not have to go over the head of the batter.

Safety First. In the event of a non-field injury umpires may halt play immediately to assess the situation and allow aid to a player(s) and later determine the appropriate outcome of the play once the injury is resolved. The running clock may be stopped by the home plate umpire in this situation.

Commitment Line. This line is ~30' from home plate and once touched by a runner's foot the runner must continue towards home plate. The runner may not retreat to 3rd base once any part of their foot has touched any part of this line. The runner must proceed towards the scoring line and can only be forced out at the "plate". If tagged, the runner is declared safe and a run is scored.

Game Times and Duration. Game start times rotate. Games will be on the 65-minute scoreboard clock. The clock will start with the first pitch. Upon time expiring, the inning in progress will be completed and the next inning shall be declared the "open inning". Exception: The time limit may be waved for the final game of the day upon agreement by both managers.

American League Rules

Schedule. The AL will declare a first half champion based on the best team record. In the case of a tie, the league will conduct a one-game playoff to determine the first half champion. All teams will begin the second half with 0-0 records. The second half champion, if different, will play the first half champion for the overall league title. The schedule and format of the playoff will be determined by the competing managers and the league Commissioner.

Trades. No trades are allowed until after the first half has completed.

Number of players. Rosters will be set at 11 players. Managers will draft 10 total (added to themselves) for a total roster of 11 players.

- Ten (10) Players are required for a Legal Game. If there are 10 Players for each team (minimum; maximum of 11), the game shall be played.
- A 10-player team can consist of 6 rostered plus 4 subs – but the team must provide their own catcher. The Middle Fielder will be absent if playing with 10 players.
- If either team has fewer than 10 players, the Managers will re-schedule the game.

Substitute Players. All players will receive an ability level designation of A, B, or C. “A” is designated for the highest ability players. If a manager knows a player will be missing, the manager can request substitutes from other teams at or lower than the missing players ability level designation under the following requirements:

1. No more than 4 total substitutes per game
2. No player may substitute for the same team more than once per week, unless separated by the weekend (i.e. a player can sub for the same team on Friday, then again on Monday)
3. Substitutes shall bat at the end of the lineup – only after the manager’s rostered players have hit.
4. Substitutes can only come from American League players

Batter’s Count. All batters will start with a 1-1 count with one foul ball to “waste” after the second strike. After the waste foul, the batter will be declared out with the next foul ball.

Home Run Rule. Each team may hit up to 3 home runs (over the fence). After 3 home runs are hit, any further home runs will be recorded as an out. Note: Inside the park home runs do not count toward the 3 home run limit.

Base Distance. The AL shall use the SSUSA tournament distance of 70 feet.

Pitch Running. A pinch runner can run from 1st or 2nd or 3rd base. No player may pinch run more than once per inning. In the event of an in-game injury, a pinch runner can be used from Home Plate, based on manager agreement. In this instance, the opposing team Manager will designate the Pinch Runner. If the injury related pinch runner reaches first base, a new pinch runner can run for them.

Intentional and Other Walks. After a batter walks for the first time, any subsequent walk(s) – intentional or otherwise – to that batter will allow that batter’s manager to either put on another runner and have the batter continue, or have the batter take first base and continue the batting order. There is no limit to the number of consecutive times a particular batter may take a walk during an at bat. Runners for walks do not count toward pinch running.

- NOTE: If a runner is on base – either from pinch running or via a walk – and they are up to bat, an out is recorded.

Infield Fly Rule. In an infield fly situation (<2 outs, runners on 1st and 2nd bases or bases loaded), if the batter hits a fair ball in the air (NOT a line drive) that may be caught by any fielder with **ordinary** effort, the umpire shall declare an infield fly and the result of the play is that the batter is out and runners must remain at their current base. There cannot be a double play in this situation.

Umpires/Scorekeeping. Each team will be required to ensure one game a week is covered. They may pool from not only their players but also any player from another, non-involved team.

Sliding. Players may slide only into second and third base, although they may slide into first base to avoid a potential collision with a fielder. Players may slide back into any base to avoid a tag. Sliding is not allowed into the home plate area.

Injuries. If there is an in-game injury, the affected team may pick up a Catcher off the fence. The catcher can be anyone, but the replacement player cannot bat.

Tie Games. For games tied at the end of regulation play, the tie will be played until one team comes out on top, regardless of how many innings are required. Tie Innings will be considered "Open Innings". At the onset of the Tie-Breaker inning, the batter who made the final out of the prior inning will be placed on second base. **IF** that batter had a pinch runner, the batter, not the pinch runner, will be placed on second base. This runner must reach third base in order to swap for a pinch-runner.

Third Base Runners. A runner at third base who chooses to stand on the line in foul territory must touch third base prior to proceeding toward home plate. The runner will need to touch third base in all hitting situations.

Central League Rules

Schedule. The Central League will play a 48-game schedule. There will be NO first or second half winner designated. The CL team with the best overall record will be the #1 Seed, then continue down the list to the #4 Seed.

At seasons end, a playoff will occur. Seed #4 will play Seed #3 in a winner take all game. The winner will play Seed #2 in a winner take all game. Then the winner of that game will play a best of three series against Seed #1.

Number of Players. There will be 12 players on a team. Everybody bats. Each of the 12 players must play the field at some point during the game. NOTE: 11 players playing the field is standard during the game. Each player in a game must play a minimum of three innings in the field. In the event of missing players, no fewer than 9 players will play the field.

A minimum of 7 roster players must play in every game. A team may only play up to 3 subs per game.

Too Few Players. A minimum of 9 players constitutes a fieldable team. Since each team is starting with 12 players, only three (3) substitutes will be authorized for play per game. The substitute players must be of the same or lower skill ranking (A, B, or C). If a team has 9 players after securing substitutions, the game may be played. If a team can only field 8 players including subs, the game will be rescheduled.

Home to first. Players must be able to run from home to first base. Any eighty (80) year old player's batted ball which hits the outfield grass is safe at first base. **Who is 80:** Any player who is at least 80 years old on the day of the game.

First Base Outs. Batters may be thrown out at first base from the outfield, unless the batter is 80 years of age or older and running for themselves. For those batters, any ball that safely reaches the outfield grass shall result in awarding first base to that hitter – can be off players glove – any ball that hits the outfield grass.

Substitute Players. Substitute players can sub TWICE per week with the restriction that they can only sub once per week for any one team. Substitute players must be of the same or lower skill ranking (A, B, or C). A sub of lesser ranking can always substitute for a higher ranked player. Substitution should not improve team quality through the substitution. If there is a conflict for a sub, the team with the lesser record gets first choice. Only Central League players can sub in the Central League. American League or National League players are not permitted to play in the Central League. Substitute players MUST bat in the LAST spot in the lineup, after rostered players.

Runner from Home Plate. All players must run to first base with no substitute allowed. The only exception is if a player is injured IN THE CURRENT GAME; they may have a substitute runner for THE CURRENT GAME only. A comparable player will be the runner; Fairness needs to be monitored. Note: If a ground ball is hit to an infielder, the batter should run to the white line and not to the base to avoid any collisions.

Pinch Runners. Any player can be a pinch runner. This is limited to only ONCE Per inning and only THREE times per game. If a pinch runner runs for someone and they are still on base when it is their turn at bat, an out is called. NOTE: Walks where a separate runner goes to first instead of the batter (the second or subsequent walk) are not considered Pinch Runners.

Batter's Count. All batters start with a 1-1 count with one foul ball to "waste". After the waste foul, the batter will be declared out with the next foul ball.

Last Game. If a Central League Team has the last game of the day (i.e. Game #2 or #3), the time clock will not be used.

Home Runs. The CL will use the 1-Up rule for Home Runs.

Scenario: Team A hits a home run, then the next home run has to be by Team B. If Team A hits another home run before Team B does, then the batter is awarded a Double. Once the opposing team matches the Home Run, the cycle will repeat, starting even (i.e. the next home run hit, by either Team A or B, then the other team must match).

Tie Games. For games tied at the end of regulation play, the tie will be played until one team comes out on top, regardless of how many innings are required. Tie Innings will be considered "Open Innings". At the onset of the Tie-Breaker inning, the batter who made the final out of the prior inning will be placed on second base. **IF** that batter had a pinch runner, the batter, not the pinch runner, will be placed on second base. This runner must reach third base in order to swap for a pinch-runner.

Base Distance. The CL will use 65' between bases.

Inning Rotation. CL will play one complete inning at a time. i.e. 3 outs per inning change.

Walk Rule. On a player's first walk of a game, the player must take first base. After receiving a second walk, and all subsequent walks, the player and manager may decide to take the walk or put a runner on in the player's place. The Player then remains at bat. Balls and strikes will be called.

Infield Fly Rule. In an Infield Fly Situation (less than 2 outs with runners on first and second base OR with the bases loaded), if the batter hits a fair pop fly in the air anywhere in the infield (NOT a line drive), the Infield Fly Rule is in effect and the batter is called out. All runners remain on their current bases. There can NOT be a double play.

Sliding. Sliding is permitted. Players may slide into second and third base, not across the base. Sliding into home plate or first base is not allowed. Players may slide back into any base to avoid a tag.

Pitching. Pitchers may deliver pitches from anywhere within the extended pitcher's box, which is lengthened by 4 feet toward home plate for Central League play. NOTE: the line closest to Homeplate marks where the screen should be placed for the Central League.

National League Rules

Scheduling and Roster Rules

Draft and Trades. A formal draft process will be used to promote fairness and competitive balance. The date of the draft will be after the American and Central league drafts. One shortstop and one pitcher per team will be drafted first. Numbers from 1-4(5) will be selected and then a traditional snake format will be utilized for the draft. Sometime after the fourth round, as agreed upon by the managers, any team without two playing managers will select another player prior to continuing the snake draft so there are an even number of players on each team. One trade per team is allowed on draft day and the proposed trade must be unanimously approved by all managers.

Game Times and Duration. Game start times rotate. Games will be on the 65-minute scoreboard clock. The clock will start with the first pitch. Upon time expiring, the inning in progress will be completed and the next inning shall be declared the "open inning". Exception: The time limit may be waived for the final game of the day upon agreement by both managers.

Season Schedule. The First Half ends mid-December and resumes near the beginning of February and runs until the end of April.

Rosters and Lineups. Ideally, teams will have 13, 14, or 15 players. The size will be finalized on Draft Day. It was agreed that 5 teams of 12 are preferred over 4 teams of 15. If a team is short players, the manager from the opposing team may provide a catcher (not required), the team may play with fewer players or teams may agree to a practice game.

Minimum number of Players. 8 regular roster players and 2 subs can make up a 10-player team (minimum for a complete roster). A team can have a maximum of 4 subs to make a 12-person roster.

Substitutions. Substitutes should be of equal or lesser ability. An A player can only substitute for an A player. If a team does not have a **pitcher or shortstop**, the manager may pick up those players even if that increases the roster past 12. In the case of a substitute conflict, the team with the lesser record shall prevail. Players may only substitute once for the same team in a week. Players from the Central or American league may not be used. No substitutions will be allowed during playoff games except for a missing A player. The playoff substitution must be agreed upon by both managers.

In the event new players join the club or return from injury/absence after the team draft, they may be placed in a pool and serve as **priority substitutes** until they are assigned to a team. Managers should select substitute players from the pool before players from other teams. The pool will be managed by the Commissioner.

Mid-Year Recalibration of Teams. At mid-season, the Commissioner, along with the Managers, will meet to discuss whether any player changes are necessary to recalibrate the teams to reach parity for the second half of the season. All proposed changes must be agreed upon by the player being moved and by a majority of the managers.

Tie Games. For games tied at the end of regulation play, one Tie-Breaker inning will be played. If the game is still tied at the end of the extra inning, the result will stand as a tie.

***Exception:** For the last game of the day, managers must decide before the start of the Tie-Breaker Inning if one inning or multiple innings will be played to break the tie. If one inning, and the game is still tied, the result is a tie. If multiple, the game will be played until the tie is broken or if the Managers collectively decide to opt for a tie.

At the onset of the Tie-Breaker inning, the batter who made the final out of the prior inning will be placed on second base. **IF** that batter had a runner from home, the runner who was assigned to the batter will be placed on second base. No other substitutions are allowed until the runner reaches third base.

Gameplay Rules

Designated Hitters. Managers may, at their discretion and with the consent of the player(s), designate players to hit only and not play in the field. A manager may designate up to two players to DH in a game. The DH players may request a courtesy runner from home plate. DH players will count towards a team's available players for substitution purposes.

Batting Order. All present and able players will be in the batting order. A player substituting for the team may bat in any spot in the order. If a player comes after the game has started, they will be inserted at the end of the lineup.

Inning Rotations. Teams will rotate batting/fielding every two innings through the first four innings (2-2-1-1-1). The seventh inning will be the "open inning" unless time has expired prior to reaching the seventh.

Batters Count. All batters will start with a 1-1 count with one foul ball to "waste" after the second strike. After the waste foul, the batter will be declared out with the next foul ball.

Pitching. Pitchers may deliver pitches from anywhere within the extended pitcher's box, which is lengthened by 4 feet toward home plate for National League play. NOTE: A Pitcher must position themselves behind the pitching screen after releasing a pitch. Failure to do so will result in the umpire calling the pitch a Ball. If the batter swings and makes contact, it will be considered a dead ball. (NOTE: the line closest to Homeplate marks where the screen should be placed for the National League.)

Walks and 'Strikes Only'. If a batter walks, then a Runner (not the Batter) is awarded first base, and the batter continues under a 'strikes only' at bat (balls are no longer called). There will still be one to "waste" after the second strike.

Runners & Courtesy Running. A player may be used as a courtesy runner only once per inning. If a courtesy runner is on base when their regular turn to bat comes up, that runner is automatically out. If a player enters as a courtesy runner and a batter strikes out, that is still counted as a once per inning use of the player.

Inclement Weather. In case of inclement or uncomfortable weather, the home team manager is responsible for contacting and conferring with the other manager to determine if a postponement is warranted. This communication should occur early enough to allow both managers to contact their players before coming to the field. If either manager decides the weather warrants a postponement, the game will not be played and should be made up within two weeks. The home team manager will notify the manager of the umpiring team so the umps can be notified as well.

Playing Rules

Distance for Bases. The distance between bases is 60 feet.

150' Line. Outfielders must stay beyond the 150' marker (line on sideline fence) until the ball is hit.

Exceptions: If the 5th run of a non-open inning is on 3rd base, the outfielders may play anywhere on the outfield grass. If the **winning** run is on 3rd base at the bottom of the final inning, all fielders can play in any position on the field except within or in front of the baselines.

Sliding. Sliding into any base is not allowed. The sliding runner will be called out and result in a "dead ball" situation. Runners may dive or slide while **returning** to a base to avoid a tag out. Runners must try to avoid contact with all fielders by veering to the side of the fielder to avoid a collision.

Infield Fly Rule. The Infield Fly Rule is not in effect in the National League.

First Base Safety Protocols. A white safety line is painted extending 3 feet from first base toward the dugout fence. If there is no play at first base, the first baseman must clear the running path.

The runner may step on either the white or orange base. If there is a play at first base, the runner must avoid all contact with the first baseman, even if the fielder is covering both bases. The runner must, at that point, run to the right of the fielder and either step on the line or touch the ground past the line before the ball is caught to be safe. The fielder must touch the white base for an out to be called.

First Base Overthrows. If a throw to first base gets past the fielder and HITS the fence anywhere or enters the dugout, the ball is dead and the batter-runner is awarded one additional base. All other runners advance to the base they were heading to *plus* one additional base. This situation only pertains to a throw to first base on an initial hit when the batter is running from home to first.

Example: A player on 3rd base scores a run; a player on 2nd base heading to 3rd base scores a run; a player on 1st base heading to 2nd goes to 3rd base; and the batter-runner lands on 2nd base.

First Base Outs. Batters may be thrown out at first base from the outfield, unless the batter is **80** years of age or older and running for themselves. For those batters, any ball that safely reaches the outfield grass shall result in awarding first base to that hitter. **Who's 80.** A player who turns 80 years of age anytime during the current season, is considered 80 for the whole season.

Runners at Third. A runner at third who chooses to stand on the line in foul territory, must touch third base when tagging up on a caught ball.

Running to Second Base. When running to second base, a runner can run to either side of the base to avoid a collision but cannot run past the base.

Umpiring, Scorekeeping, and Conduct

Umpires and Scorekeepers. Each team must provide two umpires and one scorekeeper per the schedule. Teams should try to maintain at least four qualified umpires for consistent rotation. Umpire training will be conducted prior to the start of the season. The winning manager will notify the webmaster of the final score.

Disputes and Player Conduct. Only managers may approach umpires to discuss questionable calls. Players are not permitted to argue any calls. Teams that are co-managed will appoint one manager as the spokesperson for the game and will notify the umps PRIOR TO the start of the game. The following progressive discipline should be applied to players arguing calls.

- First offense: verbal warning.
- Second offense: ejection from the game.
- Third offense (season): three-game suspension.
- Fourth offense: disqualification for the remainder of the season.

Players who wish to dispute a call must ask for timeout and speak respectfully with their manager. The manager may then approach the umpire calmly to discuss the call. Outbursts will not be tolerated.

Playoffs and Championship Format

The team who wins the first half of the season will play the team who wins the second half in a best-of-three playoff series to determine the NL champ. If one team wins both halves of the season, they will be declared NL Champion.

