

SOFTBALL OPERATING CODE

I. ORGANIZATION

A. DIVISIONAL STRUCTURE

EAST DIVISION

East Stroudsburg
Kutztown
Millersville
Shippensburg
West Chester

CENTRAL DIVISION

Bloomsburg
Clarion
Indiana
Lock Haven
Mansfield

WEST DIVISION

California
Edinboro
Gannon
Mercyhurst
Slippery Rock

- B. SOFTBALL CHAIRPERSON** - Athletic director/ associate athletic director selected as the chairperson to the softball coaches. The chair shall preside at meetings of coaches. He/she shall appoint such committees as shall be deemed necessary for carrying on the affairs of the Conference.
- C. MEETINGS:** Softball coaches will meet at least once per year at times determined by the PSAC office.
- D. UMPIRE-IN-CHIEF (UIC)** - Selected on annual basis by the conference. See Section VI for duties and responsibilities.
- E. PSAC CERTIFIED OFFICIALS** - Those umpires certified by Umpire-in-Chief. See Section VI for duties and responsibilities.

II. RULES AND GUIDELINES

A. GENERAL

1. Rules -NCAA including the tie-breaker rule (beginning in the 10th inning) in regular season play only
2. Ball - The official game ball is Worth. (NCAA approved) NCAA mandated championship ball.
3. Umpires - PSAC certified must be used for conference and non-conference games.
4. The certified athletic trainer from the host institution will have the unchallengeable authority to postpone or suspend competition in the event of lightning. The certified athletic trainer and game official/or game administrator must consult and agree as to when play is resumed.
5. Host institution shall provide water and ice.

B. DIVISIONAL PLAY

1. **Time of games** - unless otherwise mutually agreed, conference game times are as follows:
 - (a) Weekday games shall start at 2:00 p.m. before Daylight Savings Time. After Daylight Savings Time, weekday games will start at 2:30 p.m., unless an institution has lights at which the start time will be determined by the host school.
 - (b) Weekend games shall not start before noon.
 - (c) Mandated Schedule: The mandated schedule requires that each team play four 7-inning games (two home and two away) against each team in its division
 - (d) Mandated regular season schedule games must be completed by the Sunday prior to the conference championship.
 - (e) Should the final regular season mandated date on the original schedule be reached and make-up games still remain to be completed only those contests that have a bearing on the outcome of the conference tournament seeding will be completed.
2. **Division Ties:**
 - (a) Tie-breakers for determining all conference tournament seeding
 - (1) Head-to-head results
 - (2) Record versus conference divisional teams progressing downward until the tie is broken, (higher ties broken first)
 - (3) Coin toss

No play-in games are permitted under conference rules.

3. Non-completed mandated schedule:

- (a) If, because of weather or other natural causes, it becomes impossible to complete the mandated regular season schedule by the Wednesday night prior to the PSAC Championship, the commissioner shall select the division champion and runner-up in accordance with the following criteria:
- (1) winning percentage in mandated league play.
 - (2) winning percentage in head-to-head league play.
 - (3) winning percentage versus divisional champion.
 - (4) winning percentage of opponents in mandated league play in rank order of finish.
 - (5) coin toss.

4. Postponement Due to Rain

Games which are postponed because of rain must be rescheduled for the next available date. The next available date is defined as a date on which no conference mandated game has been scheduled or rescheduled.

- a. If a team has a non-conference opponent scheduled in advance for any of those dates, the opponent should be aware of the policy which requires that the non-conference game be canceled or rescheduled.
- b. All games, including make-ups, must be scheduled before the last date of the original mandated schedule.
- c. Whenever possible, in consultation with the Athletics Administrators, if the day following the originally mandated game is also rained out, teams must switch home/away dates during the first half of the double round robin in order to reschedule the contest if conditions permit a switch.
- d. If a university has concerns due to academics, the two coaches should turn the rescheduling of rained out games over to the respective athletic directors.
- e. Institutions are required to email/call the conference office with rescheduling changes.

5. Called Games:

All unfinished conference games are considered Halted Games (NCAA Rule) unless considered a Regulation Game - under the official NCAA rulebook, and must be completed from point of being called. If this involves the second game of a double-header during the teams' initial meeting, it must commence at the point of being halted prior to the start of the second set of games between the two teams. (NOTE: If the Called Game meets the definition of a Regulation Game, then the game may not be completed during the second meeting of the two teams) If it was impossible to begin the second game of the initial double header, that game will be played as the first game of a triple-header at the site of the second meeting. In all cases, the home team will be responsible for paying the officials for all games played at its site.

If during a second meeting of two teams a called game should occur, the visiting team must return to the site to complete the contests, unless the game meets the definition of a Regulation Game. Ties may occur in regular season contests as defined by NCAA Rules.

6. Speed Up Rules:

A team may only huddle at the start of an inning. A team will be charged with a timeout if it huddles subsequent to the one allowable huddle at the start of each inning.

7. Scouting

No member institution is permitted to exchange a scouting report about another member institution with an institution outside the conference.

III. CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

The PSAC Softball Championship shall be determined by a three-team double elimination tournament, with the top three teams in each tournament playing in a three-team double elimination tournament at the top remaining seed the following weekend.

1. Date – at least one week prior to the NCAA Regionals.
2. Site – TBD
3. Format – two day, double elimination tournament on Friday and Saturday.

<u>Site 1 TBA</u>	<u>Site 2 TBA</u>	<u>Site 3 TBA</u>
#1 East Division	#1 West Division	#1 Central Division
#2 West Division	#2 Central Division	#2 East Division
#3 Central Division	#3 East Division	#3 West Division

Winners of each division will meet the following weekend for a three-team double elimination tournament at the top remaining seed. The following criteria will be used to determine the seeding and host site for the second weekend:

- a. Highest Seed
 - b. Head to head competition
 - c. Common opponents with winning percentage
 - d. Record in tournament
 - e. Record versus conference mandated teams of .500 or better
 - f. Coin toss/computerized coin toss
4. Home team shall be determined by a coin toss.
 5. NCAA rules shall be used.
 6. Home team will have infield/outfield warm-up last.
 7. NCAA Tournament Qualifier - The criteria for identifying the PSAC qualifier in the event of an early termination of the championship tournament is as follows:
 - a. Highest Seed.
 - b. Head to Head competition.
 - c. Common opponents with winning percentage.
 - d. Record in tournament.
 - e. Record vs. conference mandated teams of .500 or better.
 - f. Coin toss/computerized coin toss.
 8. Scheduling of games (adjustments in the schedule shall be made by the Commissioner): **TBD**
 9. **Practice Times** – All practice times are 1 hour long and the practice times will be determined in priority in this sequence:
 - a. The team traveling the farthest distance will have the first choice.
 - b. The team traveling the second farthest distance will have the second choice.
 - c. The #1 seed of the opposite division not hosting the tournament will have the third choice.
 - d. The #1 seed of the division hosting the tournament will have the fourth choice.
 - e. The last seed left in the opposite division will have the fifth choice.
 - f. The remaining team will have the last choice.
 10. **The Championship Director**
 - a. Shall be determined on the basis of site.
 1. Hosted Site- shall be appointed by the host school and shall be responsible for the conduct of the Championship Tournament. It is inadvisable for the coach of the host institution to be appointed Championship Director if his/her team is a potential participant in the tournament.
 2. Neutral Site- the softball chair shall be responsible for the operations of the conference tournament.
 - b. Duties:
 1. Attend the pre-tournament conference call of the coaches.
 2. Prepare and distribute all necessary information and forms relative to the tournament.
 3. Make all arrangements necessary for the smooth operation of the tournament.

4. Work with the conference softball chairperson in the preparation of post-tournament financial reports (hosted site only).

11. Officials

- a. To be hired by the softball chairperson and the Conference Commissioner.
- b. Three officials shall be assigned to each game.
- c. The Umpire-In-Chief will meet coaches and team representative in the pre-tournament meeting.
- d. The Protest Committee shall consist of the four umpires not included in the contest call and chaired by the umpire in chief. This includes two game officials plus two officials who are unassigned at the time. All protests must be resolved (interpretation of rules only) before play can resume.

12. Coaches Meeting

- a. A mandatory pre-tournament conference call of coaches shall be held.
- b. The agenda of meeting shall include but not be limited to:
 1. Each coach shall present an official roster for the PSAC tournament.
 2. Clarification of the rules
 3. Announcements

13. Equipment and Maintenance

- a. A minimum of four (4) Conference adopted balls shall be provided for each game.
- b. Fields must be raked, lined, and watered if necessary before start of each game.
- c. An official scorer's table with score sheets, line-up cards, and pencils shall be set up at each field.
- d. Emergency aid and training facilities must be available within a reasonable distance. Each participating team shall be responsible for supplying its own training material (taping, etc.).
- e. Drinking water must be available for each team.

14. Official Party

- a. Each participating university shall have as its maximum official party limited to the NCAA Tournament rules for Bench Personnel. The total dressed players plus coaching/support staff (no more than 6), may not exceed the NCAA Bench personnel limitations (25).
- b. Only the eligible players may dress and sit on the bench.
- c. Changes in the roster must be made at pre-tournament meeting.

15. Trainer

- a. neutral site- appointed by the Commissioner.
- b. hosted site- furnished by host institution.

16. Awards - Tournament awards shall be determined by the current system adopted by the Conference.

IV. PERSONNEL

1 head coach

1 full-time assistant (coaching contract with benefits) or part-time assistant or volunteer

1 paid part-time assistant (half time or less) or graduate assistant or volunteer

1 volunteer

4 TOTAL COACHES

Softball Notes: In addition to the above limitations, an institution is permitted to utilize an unlimited number of full-time undergraduate students with no limitation of duties. In addition to the above limitations, an institution is permitted to utilize a maximum of four (4) social equity positions with a maximum of one (1) per sport. These positions shall be determined by the President and reported to the Commissioner.

V. LETTER OF INTENT

Each Conference member agrees to abide by the regulations and procedures outlined in the National Letter-of-Intent Programs.

VI. ALL-CONFERENCE AWARDS:

A. TEAM COMPOSITION

1. Each Division shall select an All-Conference team consisting of a first team with eleven (11) players and a second team with seven (7) players.
2. The positions of catcher, first base, second base, shortstop, third base, outfielders, *designated player/utility will all be voted together. The top vote getter at each position and the top three vote getters at outfield will make first team (nine total). The next six highest vote getters at those positions will make the second team, regardless of position. (For example, there could be two or more shortstops on the second team.) Pitchers will be voted on separately. The top two vote getters make first team, the third highest vote getter will make the second team.
*DP/Utility combines to make one position.
3. A utility player shall be defined as one who has played at least 60% of her games at a field position, including those played as a pitcher. A player who meets the criterion of playing less than 50% of her games at one position, but has played 40% or more of her games as a designated hitter/player may be nominated as a designated hitter/player, but not as a utility player.
4. Each Division shall select a Player of the Year, Pitcher of the Year, Coach of the Year and Freshman of the Year. A Freshman player shall be defined as one who is playing in her first year of intercollegiate competition.

B. NOMINATION PROCEDURE

1. A coach may nominate no more than the total number of players selected on a first team (12) from his/her team only
2. A player must have played in at least 66% of her team's games in order to be nominated.
3. A player must have played at least 50% of her total games played at a particular position in order to be nominated for that position.
A player not meeting #3 above may be nominated as a utility player.
4. Pertinent statistics must be included with each player's nomination.
5. A coach may only nominate a Player, Pitcher or Freshman of the Year from his/her team.

C. VOTING PROCEDURE

1. A coach may **not** vote for his/her own players or himself/herself.
2. A coach must cast votes equal to the total number of players selected on the first and second teams (24).
3. A coach must rank his/her votes at each position selected.
4. A ballot must be completed fully in order to be counted.
5. Ties shall be broken by a revote of uninvolved coaches.

D. MISCELLANEOUS

1. A Tournament Most Valuable Player shall be selected by the Games Committee.
2. The All-Conference Team shall be released during the week following the Conference Championship.

VII. PSAC SOFTBALL UMPIRES ASSOCIATION DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. UNIVERSITY COACHES

1. Recommend the Umpire-In-Chief to the softball liaison.
2. Develop policies/rules (performance standard, dress code, etc.).
3. Prepare and submit umpire evaluation forms to Umpire-In-Chief.
4. Contract for two (2) PSAC certified umpires for all games.
5. At the conclusion of each season the commissioner will send a ballot out to all coaches and have them rank each umpire. The assigning of the umpires will be coordinated by the commissioner for the following championship.

B. UMPIRE-IN-CHIEF

1. Conduct annual rules and mechanics clinic.
2. Certify all PSAC umpires.
3. Consolidate umpire evaluation forms.
4. Serve as official rules interpreter.
5. Attend PSAC meeting as required.
6. Assist softball chair with regular season protests.
7. Recommended PSAC play-off umpires to softball liaison by August 31.
8. Conduct umpires annual performance review and make recommendation to executive committee at post-season meeting.
9. Provide list of certified umpires to PSAC coaches.
10. Attend PSAC championship play-off.
 - (a) Serve as umpire-in-chief.
 - (b) Member of protest committee.
 - (c) Assign umpire rotation.

C. UMPIRES

1. Become PSAC certified by attending annual rules and mechanics clinic and meeting.
2. Have a minimum of 3 years college F.P. experience.
3. Pay a fee of \$25.00 to attend PSAC Certification Clinic.
4. Submit to a rating/evaluation system and annual performance review.
5. Adhere to a standard uniform dress code.
6. PSAC games are to be given special consideration when scheduling games.

D. SCHEDULE OF FEES

1. UMPIRES:

(a) Game Fee

1. Doubleheader:

2010: \$

2. Game Shortened

During first game

2010: \$

During second game - Full doubleheader fee

3. Tripleheader Fee

2010: \$

Note: Host school responsible for paying tripleheader fee

2. UMPIRE-IN-CHIEF/ASSIGNING COORDINATOR

(a) University - \$250.00 per university

(b) Umpires - \$25.00 per umpire

DRESS CODE

PSAC UMPIRES ASSOCIATION

Note: Umpires must be in matching uniform

Cap	Navy blue, sized fitted, umpire's cap. Must be worn at plate, as well as, bases.
Shirt	Navy or powder blue shirt with pointed collar REQUIRED. MUST BE CLEANED AND WRINKLE FREE.
Patch	No patches may be worn, except the NCAA patch or insignia.
Slacks	Light gray (Fechheimer or Hagger Sansabelt style) slacks with belt loops. MUST BE CLEAN AND WRINKLE FREE.
Belts	Black leather with plain buckle.
Socks	Black or navy blue ONLY.
Shoes	Black leather (plain) with appropriate sole configuration for Umpiring (NOT baseball or track spike shoes). Shoes must be clean and polished for the start of the game.
Sweater	If a sweater is worn, it must be navy blue, flat knit pullover with a V-neck.
Turtleneck	A turtleneck may be worn, but it MUST be navy, powder blue, or red. Turtlenecks are to be worn in conjunction with a jacket or sweater.
Tee Shirt	Navy blue, gray or red
Jacket	Navy blue pullover ONLY.
Ball Bag	Navy blue or gray.

CODE OF ETHICS - PSAC UMPIRE'S ASSOCIATION

1. Study the rules of the game diligently, observe the work of other officials, and attempt to improve at all times.
2. Remember that while your work as an umpire is important, you must conduct yourself in such a way that spectator attention is directed to the players playing the game and not at you.
3. Dress and maintain your appearance in a manner befitting the dignity and importance of the umpire.
4. Be fair and unbiased in your decisions, rendering them without regard to the score or the quality of the play on the field.
5. Cooperate and be professional in your associations with your fellow umpires and do nothing to cause them public embarrassment.
6. Be firm but not overbearing; positive, but never rude; dignified, but never "cocky"; remember the good umpire doesn't have the last word.
7. Be prepared both physically and mentally to administer the game.
8. Do not use tobacco in any form on or in vicinity of the campus, nor drink any alcoholic beverages while in your uniform or before a game you are to work.
9. Do not give information which might be used by a team's future opponent.
10. Keep in mind that the game is more important than the wishes of any individual player or coach or the ambitions of any individual umpire.
11. Refrain from fraternization with coaches and players of any member university.
12. Cannot umpire at any institution employed at.

SOFTBALL UMPIRES EVALUATION FORM

Home: _____ Visitor: _____ Date: _____

Coach: _____ Institution: _____

Athletic Administration Approval (Required by PSAC – Optional for others): _____

Please circle the appropriate number for each umpires' performance. (1 = Poor / 2 = Fair / 3 = Average / 4 = Good / 5 = Excellent)
 Comments are **REQUIRED** for any rating of a 1 or 2. **Complete and return every MONDAY to Dennis R. Mader - 1142 Cross Creek Road - Burgettstown, PA 15021-2402.**

(Plate 1st Game / Bases 2nd Game)

(Plate 2nd Game / Bases 1st Game)

_____ <<< UMPIRE'S NAME >>> _____

(CRITICAL ELEMENTS)

1 2 3 4 5

Mechanics

1 2 3 4 5

- Hustle for Best Angle
- Positioning
- Clarity / Emphasis of Signals

1 2 3 4 5

Technical Competence

1 2 3 4 5

- Knowledge / Application of Rules
- Line-up Card and Substitutions
- Consistency of Calls
- Preventative Officiating
- Game Control (Fans, Players, Coaches, Self)
- Calls not affected by crowd / coaches

(NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS)

1 2 3 4 5

Professionalism

1 2 3 4 5

- Attitude
- Dress Code Compliance
- Pre-Game Conference
- Timeliness - 30 Minutes before 1st game
15 minutes between games
- Appearance (Uniform & Personal)

1 2 3 4 5

Communications

1 2 3 4 5

- With Partner as officiating team
- With coaches, players and game administration

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 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ <<<< **Recommend for Advance Play** >>>> Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Score: 1<sup>st</sup> Game: \_\_\_\_\_ Winner: \_\_\_\_\_ Score: 2<sup>nd</sup> Game: \_\_\_\_\_ Winner: \_\_\_\_\_

(USE THE BACK OF THIS FORM FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION)