

# DECATUR DIXIE GIRLS SOFTBALL, INC. GENERAL OPERATING RULES

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# DECATUR DIXIE GIRLS SOFTBALL, INC.

## Official Operating Rules

*NOTE 1:* These rules are supplemental to the rules listed in the Dixie Softball Inc., Official Rule Guide, and are adopted as local rules governing operation of Decatur Dixie Girls' Softball, Inc.

*NOTE 2:* Decatur Dixie Girls' Softball, Inc. will be hereafter referred to as the Organization when appropriate.

### SECTION A: Determination of Team and League Numbers

**1. The number of teams/leagues will be dependent upon the number of players registering to play softball.**

- a. All players registering by the deadline and participating in player evaluations will be assigned to a team through the player selection process.
- b. Players who do not participate in regular or make-up player evaluations shall be placed on a team through a random draw process. This random draw process will take place at the beginning of the draft and the players will be placed in the last open slot on the teams for which they are drawn. Due to the random nature of this process, no Manager or Coach could unfairly load a team with stronger players; therefore, these players will be eligible for post season play.
- c. The player registration deadline will be commensurate with the make-up player evaluation date, except for the Debs Division. Debs registration deadline shall be 5 days prior to the date of the first Debs game.
- d. The number of teams/leagues in each division shall be determined by limiting the maximum number of players per team:

- 1) Sweetees      14 players/team
- 2) Darlings      14 players/team
- 3) Angels        14 players/team
- 4) Ponytails     13 players/team
- 5) Belles         13 players/team
- 6) Debs          15 players/team

(See Section A.1.a)

### SECTION B: MANAGERS AND COACHES

**1. Individuals desiring to manage a Decatur Dixie Girls Softball, Inc. team, in any league must submit a completed Decatur Dixie Girls Softball Application for Appointed Positions: for the current Softball Season and a signed/witnessed Acknowledgment of Policy, Creed and Procedures.**

- a. Both forms must be submitted to the Board by adjournment of the January meeting of the General Membership held prior to the beginning of the ensuing softball season.
- b. Forms may be obtained from the President, Vice-President, or Secretary prior to, or at the January meeting of the General Membership. They are also available on line at [www.ddgs.org](http://www.ddgs.org).

**2. Seniority**

**Seniority is defined as an individual's number of consecutive years of service in an official position as manager, coach, or board member (within the Organization, or at the state or national level of Dixie Softball, Inc.) for each spring season. The seniority process began with the 1980 season. ½ year of seniority is granted to individuals who serve in an official capacity during the Fall Ball season provided that they participate in at least 80% of the planned activities.**

- a. In order to obtain seniority for serving in the above positions, the provisions in Section B.1. and C-2\_- must be met. If any discrepancy is noted in the number of years of seniority, the individual must present a written explanation of the discrepancy to the Board of Directors at the time of the

General Membership meeting. After review, the Board of Directors, by majority vote, will render a decision as to whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant a change.

- b. Seniority may be removed from individuals who do not fulfill their commitments as outlined in the DDGS By-Laws, General Operating Rules and/or Standard Operating Procedures. In addition to the provisions of Section C.4., attendance in person or by representative is required at all mandatory events. The Board of Directors will declare, at the time of notification of the event, whether or not it is considered to be mandatory.

**3. Assignment to open positions shall be based on seniority with placement priority being given to individuals complying with Section B.1.**

- a. If all positions are filled in the division of the applicant's daughter, stepdaughter, sister, niece, or granddaughter's league, the seniority of the applicant will be "frozen" for a period of one year. The individual may request to manage the following season in accordance with Section **B.1**.

- b. In the event two or more applicants having equivalent seniority request the same managers position, the following prioritization scheme will be applied:

1) DEBS Division

- a. Debs coach
- b. Board member/director at local, state or national level
- c. Belles manager
- d. Belles coach
- e. Ponytails manager
- f. Ponytails coach
- g. Angels manager
- h. Angels coach
- i. Darlings manager
- j. Darlings coach
- k. Sweetees manager
- l. Sweetees coach

2) BELLES Division

- a. Belles coach
- b. Board member/director at local, state or national level
- c. Ponytails manager
- d. Ponytails coach
- e. Debs manager
- f. Debs coach
- g. Angels manager
- h. Angels coach
- i. Darlings manager
- j. Darlings coach
- k. Sweetees manager
- l. Sweetees coach

3) PONYTAILS Division

- a. Ponytails coach
- b. Board member/director at local, state or national level
- c. Angels manager
- d. Angels coach
- e. Belles manager
- f. Belles coach
- g. Debs manager
- h. Debs coach
- i. Darlings manager
- j. Darlings coach
- k. Sweetees manager
- l. Sweetees coach

4) ANGELS Division

- a. Angels coach

- b. Board member/director at local, state or national level
- c. Darlings manager
- d. Darlings coach
- e. Sweetees manager
- f. Sweetees; coach
- g. Ponytails manager
- h. Ponytails coach
- i. Belles manager
- j. Belles coach
- k. Debs manager
- l. Debs coach

5) DARLINGS Division

- a. Darlings coach
- b. Board member/director at local, state or national level
- c. Sweetees manager
- d. Sweetees coach
- e. Angels manager
- f. Angels coach
- g. Ponytails manager
- h. Ponytails coach
- i. Belles manager
- j. Belles coach
- k. Debs manager
- l. Debs coach

6) SWEETEEES Division

- a. Sweetees; coach
- b. Board member/director at local, state or national level
- c. Darlings manager
- d. Darlings coach
- e. Angels manager
- f. Angels coach
- g. Ponytails manager
- h. Ponytails coach
- i. Belles manager
- j. Belles coach
- k. Debs manager
- l. Debs coach

NOTE: In the event two or more applicants requesting the same managers position have equivalent seniority, and application of the above prioritization scheme does not distinguish the applicants, team assignment will be determined by a Board authorized draw.

**4. Consideration will be given to individuals requesting to manage a team after the January meeting of the General Membership, in the event that an insufficient number of applications are received as per Section B.1.**

a. Late applicants must submit a completed and signed Decatur Dixie Girls Softball Application for Appointed Positions: for the current Softball Season and a completed, signed and witnessed Acknowledgment of Policy, Creed and Procedures to the Board.

b. The seniority of late applicants will not be considered when making appointments.

**5. In the event that a manager does not fulfill his/her duty, the Board shall appoint an interim manager for the remainder of the season. Managerial seniority shall be accrued as designated by the finalized team roster.**

**SECTION C: RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGERS & COACHES**

**1. An individual shall officially manage only one team in Decatur Dixie Girls Softball, Inc. and may serve as an official coach on a second team.**

**2. Managers and coaches shall attend a minimum of 9 games and must participate in no less than 75% of scheduled events.**

a. Each manager and coach must sign the official score book/record of attendance within 15 minutes

of the conclusion of each game.

- b. Failure to sign the official score book/record of attendance will be considered an absence. A written note explaining an absence must be given to the League Commissioner within seven days of the game where the absence occurred.
- c. Absences reported to the League Commissioner as requested in Section **C.2.b** and for the following reasons shall be waived:
  - 1) Personal or family illness
  - 2) Job requirements
  - 3) Vacation
  - 4) Legal obligations
- d. Appropriate game attendance is required to be eligible to manage or coach a tournament team.

**3. Managers shall be responsible for receiving, maintaining, and returning allocated equipment.**

- a. Equipment will be received from and returned to the Equipment Manager or his/her designee, as he/she designates.
- b. Managers shall inspect equipment for defects prior to signing for receipt.
- c. Managers shall report equipment needs, and defects to the Equipment Manager.
  - 1) The Equipment Manager shall make equipment exchanges during the first and second weeks of practice, on two designated nights.
  - 2) Managers must contact the Equipment Manager for exchanges, replacements and repairs after the times designated as stated in Section **C.3.c.1**.
- c. Maintenance and return of all equipment as specified is required to retain managing or coaching eligibility for the following season.

**4. Managers shall be responsible for attending a rules meeting and demonstrating an understanding of the rules contained in the Decatur Dixie Girls Softball, Inc. General Operating Rules, and Dixie Softball, Inc. Official Rule Guide Fast Pitch/Slow Pitch.**

- a. The League Commissioner shall schedule a meeting, prior to opening day to discuss the rules, and administer a questionnaire.
- b. One additional meeting shall be scheduled to accommodate those having conflicts with the initial meeting.
- c. Attendance at one of the two meetings is required to be eligible to participate in the Organization as an official manager.

**5. Managers shall monitor and encourage the sportsmanlike behavior of all players, coaches and spectators associated with the team. (See G.4.b)**

**6. Managers are responsible for notifying the League Commissioner of team problems.**

- a. Managers shall notify the League Commissioner of any player(s) that withdraw from the roster. (See Section **D.1.c**)
- b. Managers shall notify the League Commissioner or his/her agent of injuries incurred by any player(s) during games or practices. (See Section **D.1.c**)

**7. Teams will be eligible to play when the manager has appointed a team parent(s) and reported his/her appointee to the Auxiliary Chairperson.**

**SECTION D: PLAYER SELECTION PROCESS: TERMS OF ELIGIBILITY**

- 1. All players must register with the Organization to be eligible to be selected to a team.**

- a. Scheduled registration will be held on more than one date, prior to the scheduled player evaluation dates.
  - b. Late registration will be held at the time of the player evaluation process and immediately preceding each division's player selection process. (See Section **A.1.a, b**)
  - c. Players who register after the player selection process will be placed on the team with the least number of players provided that such placement will not cause a team to go over the maximum number of players. In the event that all teams are at their maximum number of players, the late registrant will be placed on a reserve roster. Placement on a team will occur as the vice-president is notified by League Commissioners and/ or team Managers of teams falling below the maximum number of players due to attrition or injury.
- 2. Players in all divisions above the Sweetee division must participate in player evaluations prior to the player selection process.**
- a. Players will be informed of the location, date, time, and requirements of player evaluations and make-up evaluations for each division at the time of registration.
  - b. Player evaluations will include segments in catching, throwing, fielding, running, and hitting. Players in the Angel, Ponytail and Belle divisions will also be required to participate in a pitching evaluation.
    - 1) Pitchers with the highest evaluation scores and/or those that have otherwise proven ability will be ranked either Gold or Silver and placed in a pitcher pool. Managers, Board Members and player agents are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate players are in the pool. For example – if a player was a pitcher in the previous season, but had a bad evaluation, she will be placed in the pitchers pool.
    - 2) There will be enough pitchers in the pool to ensure that each team has an equal number of pitchers. For example – 13 pitchers and 6 teams: the 12 highest ranked pitchers will be placed in the pool with the remainder going into the regular player selection process.
    - 3) However, pitcher ages will be included in parody for the regular selection process.
    - 4) If a pitcher is used as a manager's option, the option will be considered a selection from the pitcher pool within that players rank (Gold or Silver).
  - c. Players who have been designated as Manager's options may choose not to participate in evaluations; except that Manager's options in the Angel, Ponytail and Belle divisions **MUST** participate in the pitching evaluation.
  - d. Players may not request a specific team or Manager/Coach. The Board of Directors will give consideration to parents written requests that their child **NOT** play for a particular Manager/Coach. Only one such request will be considered per player. These requests must state the name of the player, the name of the Manager/Coach, the reason for the request and be submitted at the time of application. Though the Board will give consideration to all requests, approval is not guaranteed.
- 3. Prior to the player selection process, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may request permission to promote their player to the next age division one-year early.**
- a. A written request must be submitted at the time of registration.
  - b. The decision of the Board will be based upon the previously demonstrated ability of the player to compete safely in the next age division.
- 4. Player options**
- a. One manager's option is provided to allow a manager's selection of his/her daughter, or

stepdaughter, or sister, or niece, or granddaughter to the team to which he/she was assigned. Managers may not choose another player as their option in lieu of choosing their own daughter, stepdaughter, sister, niece, etc., with the intention of otherwise choosing their relative in the player selection process.

- b. Sister options will be identified prior to the player selection process.
  - 1) Sisters may choose to exercise an option to be selected to different teams.
  - 2) Sister options are allowed with the second sister moving to the teams last round pick. The team that selects a sister will participate in the next round of the player selection process if the team has player spots available.
- c. One team option is provided to allow a Manager's selection of his Assistant Coach's daughter. Managers may not utilize their Team Option to draft more than one Gold Pitcher. Each team will only be allowed one Gold and one Silver Pitcher as described in the Section D) Topic 2. Rule b. above.

#### **SECTION E: PLAYER SELECTION PROCESS: METHODS OF SELECTION**

- 1. All teams shall be included in the player selection process for a given age division.**
- 2. Prior to the beginning of the player selection process, the League Commissioner will determine and inform each manager of the number of players to be selected through the regular player selection process.**
  - a. Players shall be selected to teams in the age division as recommended by Dixie Softball, Inc.
  - b. Declaration of manager's options and sister options shall be made prior to the determination of parity.
  - c. Player parity will be determined by the League Commissioner, or his/her agent to provide each team with equal numbers of players from each age group in that division.
  - d. Total numbers of team members has precedence over equality of age groups.
- 3. Managers shall select players in the order established by the League Commissioner(s).**
  - a. Options shall be declared prior to the regular player selection process.
  - b. Selection order shall be determined by a random draw.
- 4. During each round of the player selection process, a team, at its turn may select from any age group.**
  - a. An age slot shall be available prior to the selection of a player.
  - b. Sister options shall be selected in accordance with Section **D.4.b** with parity prevailing.
- 5. Managers may not swap players after the draft is finalized.**
- 6. All Players will be evaluated in all aspects by the division commissioner, president and at least one other impartial evaluator. The president may designate who these evaluators are. In Angels and all the divisions above Angels, the determination of the Gold and Silver Pitching Pool will be by this group. In special cases during the draft, the evaluations of this group will help determine decisions made by the player agents. The managers should still perform their own evaluations and rankings for the purpose of the draft.**

#### **SECTION F: LOCAL OPTIONS TO DIXIE SOFTBALL, INC. RULES**

- 1. Game times and game time limits shall be established for each age division.**
  - a. Each age division shall observe the following game time limits.
    - 1) Sweetees      1 hour

- 2) Darlings            1 hour 15 minutes
- 3) Angels             1 hour 30 minutes
- 4) Ponytails         1 hour 30 minutes
- 5) Belles             1 hour 30 minutes
- 6) Debs                2 hours

b. No game shall begin after 9:00 p.m.

**2. The assigned scorekeeper shall be responsible for recording and reporting game times. The home team will be the official scorebook.**

- a. Official game time shall begin and be recorded in the official score book when the home plate umpire announces "Play Ball".
- b. The beginning and expiration of official game time shall be announced to managers and officials.
- c. Game delays called by the home plate umpire shall be recorded in the scorebook.
  - 1) The duration of such delays shall be announced to managers and officials when play resumes.
  - 2) The time elapsed during a delay shall be added to the remaining game time, and reported to managers and officials.

**3. Game time limits have precedence over the number of innings required for completion of a regulation game, except when game time expires with a tie score. Play continues to resolve the tie.**

NOTE: Within the Sweetees division, should time expire with a tie score, play shall resume with the addition of one inning to resolve the tie. Should the tie not be resolved, the game will end in a tie.

**4. Game time limits have precedence over the number of innings required for completion of a regulation game, except when time expires prior to the completion of an inning.**

- a. A new inning begins with the umpire's calling of the last out of the previous inning. (See Section F.2)
- b. Play may continue to complete the current inning. (See Official Rule Guide; definition of "Inning".)

**5. Start of a game due to an inadequate number of players shall be at the later time of 15 minutes after the scheduled game start time or 15 minutes after conclusion of the proceeding game.**

- a. A team must have the required number of players to start or continue a game or that team will forfeit the game. Requirements are as follows:  
DIXIE SWEETEEES, DARLINGS and ANGELS ten (10) players, and DIXIE PONYTAILS, BELLES and DEBS nine (9) players. Teams without the proper number of players may borrow players from within their division or a younger division to bring the number of players up to the proper number of players, without penalty, as long as the borrowed player is a registered player from the same league. Players shall not be allowed to pitch for any team using them as a borrowed player.
- b. In the event that neither team reports to the assigned field with the minimum number of official, uniformed players, both teams shall be deemed to forfeit the game.
- c. Games determined to be forfeitures shall not be rescheduled.
- d. No one shall have the authority to excuse one team from reporting to a scheduled game.
- e. Games can be rescheduled due to rainouts or as a direct result of church and/or school functions which causes teams to fall below the minimum number of players with a 48hr. notice by the affected manager.

**6. All players attending games shall be provided with the opportunity to participate.**

- a. All players on Belles, Ponytails, Angels, Darlings, and Sweetees Division teams shall be included in the batting order rotation of each game.
- b. All players on Belles, Ponytails, Angels, Darlings, and Sweetees Division teams shall be subject to

the defensive participation rules of the Dixie Softball, Inc. Official Rule Guide, Fast/Slow Pitch.

NOTE: All Sweetees players shall be permitted to occupy defensive positions in every inning.

7. **Teams in the Angel, Darling and Sweetees Divisions shall observe a ten batter per inning rule.**
8. **Teams in Ponytails, Belles, and Debs Divisions shall observe a ten-run per inning rule. The team at bat will retire after ten runs have been scored, with the exception of play in progress.**
9. **Only the President, or his/her designated representative shall have the authority to rule on the playability of the field due to weather or field condition prior to game time.**
10. **All age divisions, except Sweetees, and Debs, shall schedule a split season, as deemed plausible by the Board.**
  - a. Winners of the first half season and second half season shall be declared in each league when feasible. The Board of directors shall make a determination regarding this rule at the beginning of each season.
    - 1) Comparison of half season records, (based on percentage), shall be used to determine the half season winner.
    - 2) A tie between two or more teams remaining after application of Section **F.10.a.1** shall be settled by scheduling a single-elimination series of games to determine the winner.
      - A. The League Commissioner shall determine scheduling.
      - B. When an odd number of teams are eligible for selection, the bye game shall be assigned by a draw.
      - C. Teams shall play at the scheduled time or forfeit.
  - b. The League Commissioner shall schedule a one game play off, in the event that different teams are declared as first and second half winners.
  - c. Excepting the Sweetee Division, it is the expressed intent of DDGS for all teams to franchise each year and that all divisions participate in district level post season play (All Stars). Any individual or group of individuals with an interest who do not believe this to be in the best interest of the players or the organization, may submit their concerns in writing to the Board of Directors.
11. **In Sweetee Division, when coach pitch is used, each player may receive and be allowed to swing at 5 pitches.**
12. **It is important that all players facing coach pitchers see pitches similar to those that they will face from player pitchers in higher divisions. A fast pitch softball is to be thrown underhanded, straight, and quickly toward the batter. Pitches that are thrown in a slow pitch style, i.e., too slowly, or with too much of an arc, will be considered illegal. Officials will give coach pitchers one warning per inning for illegal pitching. When the official determines that an illegal pitch has been thrown, he/she will call "illegal pitch". If the batter does not hit or swing at the pitch, it will be considered a ball. If the batter swings and hits the ball, the following will apply:**
  - a. If the batter has less than 2 strikes and has received less than 5 pitches, she will be called back to the plate to take another pitch.
  - b. If the batter has received 5 or more pitches, she will be called out.
  - c. The official has the sole authority in calling an illegal pitch. If, after receiving a warning, a coach pitcher continues to throw illegal pitches in the same inning, or to the same batter, he/she will be asked to leave the pitching position for the remainder of the game and the manager will be directed to bring another coach pitcher to the circle immediately. This rule is not intended to be so strict as to penalize for the occasional high or loose pitch.
13. **In the Angels division, after four (4) batters have walked in an inning, the offensive team's manager or coach comes in to pitch for the rest of the inning. (NOTE: A hit batter does count as a walk). Present coach-pitch rules that appear in the DIXIE DARLINGS SPECIFIC PLAYING**

RULES will apply to satisfy this rule.

NOTE: A pitcher removed from the mound under this rule may return to the mound in the next continue to pitch until such time her coach removes her for circumstances other than what is covered in this rule.

NOTE: This rule only applies to the first four games of the Season. After that, the player pitcher(s) must pitch the entire inning until the inning concludes or until she is removed from the mound by her Coach.

14. A pitcher shall not pitch in consecutive games played by her team in the same week if she has pitched: DIXIE ANGELS and PONYTAILS — in three (3) or more innings of the previous game, and DIXIE BELLES and DEBS - in four (4) or more innings of the previous game.
15. In the Angels Division, the base-runner shall be allowed to advance at their own peril (steal) once the pitch crosses the plate. The base-runner shall only be allowed to steal one base at a time. Once the base-runner has safely advanced to the next base during a steal attempt, the play will be called dead. Unless, of course, the batter has batted the ball in this case, regular base running rules apply. The Base-runner may advance one base on a wild pitch by the pitcher or a passed ball by the catcher. Under no circumstance, will the base-runner be allowed to steal Home. If a base-runner leaves her base before the pitch reaches the batter, the base umpire shall signal "delayed dead ball" to indicate the violation at the time it occurs. The defensive team shall have the privilege of having nullified any portion of the play that occurred on the violation.

16. Adopt the Run on dropped third strike for Ponytails:

(A) — The catcher shall not be required to catch the third (3rd) strike, except for a foul tip, if first (1st) base is occupied with less than two (2) outs. The batter is out and all base-runners advance at their own risk.

(B) — The catcher shall be required to catch the third (3rd) strike when there are two (2) outs or when first base is unoccupied. The batter may advance to first base with liability to being put out, either by the catcher touching the batter with the ball or throwing the ball to first base for the put out, if the catcher misses the third (3rd) strike. All other base-runners advance at their own risk with liability to being put out.

EXAMPLE A: The third (3rd) strike is not caught by the catcher with two (2) outs in the inning and a runner on third base. The catcher does not throw the ball to first base nor touches the batter with the ball, the runner at third stays at third and does not try to advance. RULING: The batter is safe at first and the count remains at two (2) outs.

EXAMPLE B: The catcher does not catch the third (3rd) strike with two (2) outs and the bases loaded. She does not throw the ball to any base but touches home plate with the ball in her possession. RULING: The base-runner at third is out because it became a force play.

NOTE: To make this rule applicable a missed third (3rd) strike shall be judged as a ball that either, passed by the catcher, was dropped by the catcher or hit the ground before reaching the catcher.

## **SECTION G: MISCELLANEOUS LOCAL RULES**

1. Pre- season and season practices shall be conducted.
  - a. Practices may begin prior to 8:00 P.M. and may be held on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Debs Division practices may begin prior to 9:00 p.m. **(NOTE: Sweetees division may have no more than 3 outings per week, this includes games and practices.)**
  - b. Practices beginning and ending prior to 5:00 p.m. may be held on Wednesday.
  - c. Practices may be held on Sunday between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.
  - d. Practices may be held for 2 or fewer hours.

- e. Only one scheduled practice per day is permitted, with the exception of Tournament Teams.
- f. Practices may be held ONLY after team selections have been officially made through the player selection process.
- g. Pre-season, when related to team practice is defined as the period between the player selection process and opening day.
- h. Practices held prior to the player selection process or between individuals planning to manage or coach a team the next season are STRONGLY discouraged.

NOTE 1: Policies **G.1.b-c** are requirements established through the contractual agreement with Decatur City Parks and Recreation Department.

NOTE 2: Failure to follow the policies in **G.1.a-h** above will be considered a violation of the Creed and can subject that person to severe penalties; i.e., being removed from any position with the Organization for repeat offenses.

**2. Unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of managers, coaches, or other officials of the organization will not be tolerated.**

- a. Commissioners will have the authority to give warnings, remove from the field, or take such actions as may be necessary to resolve any situation.
- b. All incidents involving misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct will be reviewed by the Board and may result in censure or dismissal of the offending party or parties.
- c. Any board member with direct involvement within a division will be excused from ethics rulings within that division.

**3. Each season the Board will determine the methods for delegation of officiating duties.**

- a. The Board or an appointed representative will negotiate contractual agreements with officiating associations thereof.
- b. In the event that delegation of officiating duties requires the assignment of a chief umpire, then the Board will consider nominations for and elect a chief umpire.
  - 1) The chief umpire and the Vice-President will then be responsible for recruiting, selecting, training, certifying and scheduling umpires for the season.
  - 2) Monitoring and correcting the conduct, performance and behavior of umpires shall be a responsibility of the chief umpire. (See Section **G.3.c, d**)
- c. No umpire will be allowed to work a game in any division in which he/she or an immediate relative has any direct involvement.
- d. Within a division (i.e., Ponytail), an umpire may be placed on probation upon concurrence of 2/3 of the managers of that division that the quality of umpiring is unsuitable.
  - 1) Complaints must be submitted in writing, signed by 2/3 of the managers and submitted to the vice-president who will in turn submit the complaint to the chief umpire.
  - 2) The chief umpire may remove said umpire from duties in that division immediately.
  - 3) The Board shall review the decision and approve or nullify the action taken by the chief umpire.
  - 4) The umpire in question shall have the right to attend the Board meeting to present his/her reasons for action taken.

NOTE: If the umpire in question is from an officiating association under contract to Decatur Dixie Girls Softball, Inc., then the terms of that contract will be followed.

**4. Umpires shall control the game at all times.**

- a. Behavior by any player, coach, manager or spectator that is deemed inappropriate or unsportsmanlike by the umpire shall be immediately reported to the manager of the team involved.
  - b. The manager will be responsible for immediately correcting or controlling the cited conduct. (See Section **C.5**)
  - c. Failure of the manager to immediately or appropriately correct or control the behavior may result the umpire's requiring forfeiture of the game.
- 5. Incidents requiring removal of any player, coach, manager, or spectator from the field for any reason must be reported to the League Commissioner by the umpire and affected manager within twenty-four hours following the official game ending time.**
- a. Any player ejected by an umpire from a game shall remain in uniform and on the bench for the remainder of the game in progress.
  - b. An ejected player leaving the bench before the end of the game in progress shall be benched for the duration of the next game she attends.
  - c. An ejected player shall not be allowed to play until this condition of Section **G.5.b** has been met.
- 6. Annual election of a five- (5) member protest committee shall be held at the January meeting of the General Membership.**
- a. The elected protest committee will serve for the duration of the current season to hear all game protests in the Organization.
  - b. Protest committee members should be former Dixie Softball managers, coaches, and/or board members.
  - c. At the time of an officially filed protest, the President shall appoint three (3) of the protest committee members to oversee the proper hearing of the protest.
    - 1) The President or his/her agent shall select the three members to serve, and notify parties involved as to the date, time and location of the hearing. (See section **G.6.d.1**)).
    - 2) One of the three shall serve as the chairperson, appointed by the President.
    - 3) None of the three shall have a direct tie to the team, league, or division involved in the protest.
  - d. The appointed protest committee shall oversee the protest hearing.
    - 1) The following individuals shall attend the protest hearing:  
 Protesting Manager -Opposing Team Manager -Umpire(s) involved -Official Assigned Scorekeeper -League Commissioner(s) -Any other party possessing pertinent information.
    - 2) Each person shall be provided with an opportunity to present his/her information relating to the protest.
    - 3) Following the presentations, the protest committee may question the parties as deemed necessary.
    - 4) The committee will meet in private to render a written decision, indicating the rule(s) and page(s) on which the decision was based.
    - 5) The parties shall be informed of their right to appeal the decision to the Board, and all parties shall appear at the appeal.
    - 6) Upon appeal to the Board, board members having any connection to the protest shall be prohibited from voting on the protest.
  - e. The time, date and place of the hearing shall be determined by the President or his/her agent and all parties shall be informed.
- 7. The individual rights of players will be overseen by elected player agents.**

- a. Nominations and election of player agents will be held at the January meeting of the General Membership.
  - b. Nominees should have no direct relationship to any manager, coach, or player in the respective division.
  - c. Replacements or new appointments will be made by majority vote of the respective league managers.
  - d. Player agent(s) shall be present at registration, coach evaluations, the player selection process, and all star selection process.
- 8. A player missing two or more practices or games must submit, upon the manager's request, written proof for the reason of the absences.**
- a. The proof may be requested when returning to the next practice or game.
  - b. Disciplinary action for the absences shall be left to the discretion of the team's manager, but must be reported to the League Commissioner to insure consistency of application.
- 9. Concession duties shall be assigned to agents designated by the Board. Board members, including division commissioners shall be afforded free drinks from concessions during games, events and meetings.**
- 10. Scorekeeping/Score Reporting**
- a. The home team will be responsible for maintaining the official book and turning in game scores/events to the concessions stand at the end of games.
  - b. The visiting team is responsible for running the press box and making sure scoreboards are turned in and press boxes locked up after the last game.
- 11. Fall Play – Intended as instructional season for players moving to higher divisions and new players (for 2007 only, adjustments to be made as deemed necessary by the Board)**
- a. Divisions
    - 1) Ages 4-7 (Sweetee/Darling)
    - 2) Ages 8-9 (Angel)
    - 3) Ages 10-11 (Ponytail)
  - b. Players must have reached their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday at the time of registration for fall play. All players will be placed in a division based on their age as of May 1 of the upcoming spring season.
  - c. No player shall play in a single position for more than 6 consecutive outs.
  - d. Each player must play 3 consecutive outs in the infield.
  - e. Teams will be selected by a random draw at each game time.
  - f. For Angels Division, after any player pitcher gives up four (4) consecutive walks, the remainder of the half inning will be played as coach pitch.

**12. Pre-game prayer**

**The umpire or an adult leader from the home team shall be responsible for holding prayer with all who wish to participate prior to each game. The players, managers, coaches and umpires shall meet on the pitching rubber prior to each game for this purpose.**

**SECTION H: SELECTION OF TOURNAMENT TEAMS**

- 1. A special meeting shall be scheduled by the League Commissioner for the purpose of selecting**

**players to the All-star Tournament Teams.**

NOTE: All-star Tournament Teams shall be referred to as Tournament Teams, as associated players shall be referred to as Players.

- a. All managers or his/her official coach shall be permitted to attend the special meeting and vote.

NOTE: A League Commissioner shall appoint another Board member to conduct the special meeting if he/she is the manager of a team in the league for which he/she is the League Commissioner.

- b. The President shall appoint one player agent, who has no affiliation with the applicable League, to attend the special meeting to insure the integrity of the selection process.
  - 1) The player agent shall represent and protect the interests of all players eligible for selection.
  - 2) The player agent may nullify the entire election, if he/she deems that the selection process violated the interests of the players, due to a lack of sincerity of the voting participants.
- c. All players participating in the minimum number of games as specified by Dixie Softball, Inc. in Official Rule Guide Fast Pitch/Slow Pitch.
  - 1) The League Commissioner shall confirm with managers the eligibility status and interest of all players on his/her team.
  - 2) The League Commissioner shall announce the eligibility of all players meeting the eligibility requirements and expressing a desire to be selected to the Tournament Teams.
  - 3) Managers shall be allowed to make specific comments about any player(s).

**2. The League Commissioner shall administer all rounds of balloting.**

- a. Each round of voting shall be by means of secret ballot.
  - 1) The ballots shall be issued, collected, and recorded on a tally sheet by the League Commissioner or player agent.
  - 2) The League Commissioner shall add players, receiving the required number of votes, to the Tournament Team.
- b. All managers or his/her official coach must vote for a number of players equal to the roster number specified by Dixie Softball, Inc. minus one on the first ballot.
  - 1) Determination of the roster number shall be in accordance with Dixie Softball, Inc. tournament rules.
  - 2) The Tournament Team manager shall be allowed to select the final Tournament Team member.
- c. On each ballot, subsequent to the first ballot, the manager or his/her official Coach shall vote for the number of players required to complete the Tournament Team roster as specified by Dixie softball, Inc.

**3. Player selections to the Tournament Team shall be by unanimous vote, until the League Commissioner determines an impasse has been reached.**

- a. An impasse is defined as a minimum of two (2) consecutive rounds in which no player is unanimously selected.
- b. A player receiving zero (0) votes, in two (2) consecutive rounds, shall be dropped from the ballot.
- c. The League Commissioner shall announce the impasse and in the next round of balloting, players receiving a number of votes equal to the unanimous total minus one shall be added to the roster.
- d. There shall be a two (2)-hour time limit for the selection of a tournament team.

NOTE: Should the team's roster not be filled within the allotted time, the presiding officer and player agent shall fill the remaining slots based upon the total number of votes received for each player throughout the entire selection process.

- e. The results shall remain confidential until announcement at Closing Ceremonies, or at a time deemed appropriate by the President and/or Board. NOTE: Violation of this confidentiality may result in revocation of manager duties in the current or following season.

**2. A player selected to the Tournament Team shall fulfill her responsibilities to the team.**

- a. Tournament team players are expected to participate in all team practices and activities.
  - 1) Players who miss any scheduled practice or event must be excused by the team's Manager and the division commissioner or league president.
  - 2) Managers who request the removal of a player due to a lack of consistent participation must present their written request to the league commissioner, the league president and the player/parent immediately following the most recent event of non-participation.
  - 3) The player/parent shall be entitled to a hearing before the Board of Directors with representation by their division's player agent if such hearing is requested within 48 hours of receipt of the request for removal.
- b. A player that withdraws her name after selection to and announcement of the teams shall provide a written defense of her actions.
  - 1) The written defense shall be presented to the manager of the Tournament Team, the division Commissioner and the League President.
  - 2) The Board of Directors will review the player's defense and the recommendation of the Manager. Should the Board find that the defense is not justified, the player may be rendered ineligible for selection to a Tournament Team the following season.
- c. Failure to provide an acceptable reason(s) will result in the manager's reporting of the player's actions and reasons to the Board.
  - 1) The report shall be made no later than the fall meeting of the General Membership.
  - 2) The manager shall present his/her position and recommended decision to the Board for a final ruling.

**3. Selection of replacement players after the original Tournament Team selection shall be made by the manager of the Tournament Team, with the agreement of the League Commissioner and player agent.**

NOTE: Replacement players shall be selected from those specifically nominated in the balloting process.

**4. The manager of the League championship team shall have the first option to manage the League Tournament Team.**

- a. In the event the manager declines, the manager of the second-place or runner-up team shall be named manager of the League Tournament Team.
- b. The manager shall select from the officially rostered managers and coaches in the same league to complete a coaching staff for the Tournament Team.

**5. The Sweetees Division shall not select players to a Tournament Team.**

**6. It is the intention of DDGS that all Tournament Teams be outfitted in a similar manner so as to proudly represent the City of Decatur. Therefore, all Tournament Team uniforms must be**

**approved by the Board. Tournament Teams may be asked to solicit sponsorship and organize fundraising activities to offset costs to the organization. Specific instructions will be given to the Tournament Team Managers at the Tournament Team player selection process. All fundraising activities must be approved by the Board of Directors.**

*Revised, 2008-2009 DDGS Board of Directors January, 2009*