

# SSBL-Madison

## Softball Code

**1.0 Purpose** – To create a standard set of rules for the efficient and equitable operation of SSBL-Madison.

### **2.0 Definitions**

1. Recreational Division – The recreational division would be formed by individuals registering for the Madison Gay Softball League and indicating that they are interested in the recreational division. The league (specifically, the membership committee) would look at the individual skill level of each player (based on past performance in the Madison Gay Softball League or other softball league, assessment from the skill building clinics, and/or information from a player survey) and form evenly matched teams based on these individual skill sets.

A recreational player is an individual that is less concerned about the outcome of the game and more interested in participation in the sport, building camaraderie with teammates and opponents, and developing a greater appreciation for the game of softball. Recreational players tend to be newer players with limited softball experience or skills, or those that view the softball games as a social event where they can meet and interact with old friends and meet new people.

In the recreational league, each player on the team will be given an equal opportunity to participate in the games. For example, if there are more than 10 people on the team, a rotation will be set up to ensure each player has an equal amount of playing time (averaged out over the season).

2. Competitive Division – Teams are formed by individuals (or small groups of individuals) registering in the Madison Gay Softball League and indicating that they are interested in the competitive division, the league (specifically, the membership committee) would look at the individual skill level of each player (based on past performance in the Madison Gay Softball League or other softball league, assessment from the skill building clinics, and/or information from a player survey) and form evenly matched teams based on these individual skill sets.

Competitive players have a “Winning is the Most Important Thing” mentality. This is not to say that people who want to play in a competitive environment don’t want to build camaraderie or interact with friends (new or old), but when they are on the field, they take advantage of every situation and expect the same of their teammates. This will generally lead to the more talented players on the team having more playing time than the less talented players (generally the same players sit out or rotate during games).

3. Madison Schools and Community Recreation – Madison School & Community Recreation (MSCR) is the public recreation provider for the residents of Madison (within the boundaries of the Madison Metropolitan School District).
4. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – Any behavior that disrupts the play of the game and/or could harm another person, including (but not limited to):
  - a. Derogatory comments or gestures toward any other player, coach, umpire, or spectator in the stand.
  - b. Arguing with the umpire or coach.
  - c. Physical altercations.
  - d. Throwing equipment.
  - e. Vulgar language.
  - f. Any conduct that could be deemed offensive to the average individual players in SSBL-Madison.

### **3.0 Recreational Division**

1. Teams – Only individuals will be allowed to register for the recreational division. No team registration will be allowed.
  - a. Teams will be formed from the pool of registered players by the Membership Committee, with an emphasis on maintaining an equal balance of skill sets on all teams.
  - b. All efforts will be made to accommodate “reasonable” player requests.
  - c. All team names need to be submitted before the 3<sup>rd</sup> game of the season and need to be approved by the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner.
2. Player Eligibility – An individual will be eligible to play in any scheduled game for the team they are assigned, provided they are a registered player, with the following exception:
  - a. Individuals on the “Player Suspension / Ineligibility Statement” that are currently ineligible or serving a suspension.
3. Players – The needs of the individual players shall outweigh the needs of the team.

# SSBL-Madison

## Softball Code

- a. The coach of each team must ensure that equal playing time is allotted to all players who desire equal playing time.
4. Coaches – Coaches will be responsible for their player’s understanding of the rules of the game and their behavior on the field.
  - a. Coaches must ensure that all players fully understand the rules of the game.
  - b. Coaches should proactively teach their players strategy that will improve individual and team performance.
5. Player Substitution – Only players registered on a Recreational team’s roster are eligible to play. Registered players from another team in the recreational division may act as a substitute player, provided:
  - a. The team requesting the substitute has less than 10 players available for play.
  - b. The opposing team will have the opportunity to provide a player for substitution first.
  - c. If the opposing team does not wish to supply a substitute from their team, a player with comparable skills to the missing player may be chosen from any other team in the league.
    - i. *The substitute must be approved by both coaches of the teams playing.*
    - ii. *If an appropriate substitution cannot be determined by the coaches, they may appeal to the Assistant Commissioner or Commissioner.*
  - d. Players may only be a substitute in one game per night.
6. Playing Regulations – All games shall be conducted in accordance with MSCR rules for Men’s Slow Pitch Softball (see Appendix A) with the following exception:
  - a. Men and Women may compete on the same team.
7. Player Disqualification or Suspension – A player may be disqualified or deemed ineligible (and placed on the “Player Suspension / Ineligibility Statement”) for any of the following violations:
  - a. Unsportsmanlike Conduct on the Field, in the Dug Out, or while in the stands.
    - i. *Penalty – Automatic Suspension for two games.*
  - b. Commission of Fraud such as playing under an assumed name, falsifying the Player Application Form, or violation of the “Under 18” policy.
    - i. *Penalty – Automatic Suspension for rest of season.*
  - c. Knowingly violating any applicable rule in the SSBL-Madison Bylaws or Softball Code
    - i. *Penalty – Recommendation of the Softball Code Committee.*
8. Player Disqualification or Suspension Procedures
  - a. Violations can be identified by the following:
    - i. *Umpire can make a determination on Unsportsmanlike Conduct while the player is on the field or in the dugout.*
    - ii. *Violations can be reported to any Coach or Board Member. The Coach or Board Member must immediately report the incident to the Softball Code Committee for review.*
  - b. Any violation that holds an automatic penalty will be enforced immediately.
  - c. Any violation that does not hold an automatic penalty will be reviewed by the Softball Code committee within two days of learning of the violation. The Softball Code Committee will issue the penalty to the player. That penalty will be enforced unless overturned by the Ethics Committee.
    - i. *The player and coach must be notified of any penalty at least two days prior to the next scheduled game.*
    - ii. *The player may appeal the ruling to the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee will attempt to convene prior to the start of the next game.*
  - d. All violations will be reviewed at the next scheduled General Council Meeting.
9. Schedule – The schedule will be set by MSCR (with the direction of the Assistant Commissioner). Once posted, changes to the schedule will not be allowed, with the exception of weather delays.
10. Incident Weather – MSCR will post weather cancellations on their website by 4:00pm on game day.
  - a. The Assistant Commissioner will monitor the MSCR Weather Cancellation page and relay any cancellation information to all coaches immediately.
    - i. *Coaches must notify each player at their registered “Game Day Phone Number” to inform them of the cancellation.*
11. Equipment
  - a. Fields – Prepped fields will be provided by MSCR.
  - b. Bases – Safety bases will be provided by MSCR.

# SSBL-Madison

## Softball Code

- i. A double first base will be used.
  - ii. A Black Mat will be used to determine Strikes / Balls and for use by the Runner when tagging home.
  - c. Bats – MSCR will maintain a list of Banned bats. Bats will be inspected by the umpire prior to the start of the game. Any individual caught using an unapproved bat will be called out and may be required to serve a disciplinary suspension at the discretion of the Softball Code Committee.
  - d. Balls – MSCR will supply game balls. The balls will have a 0.440 rated core with restricted flight. All balls used must be stamped with the MSCR logo.
  - e. Uniforms – Each individual will be supplied a team shirt with the “Madison Gay Softball” Logo and their team color. Players are requested to wear their team shirt when playing.
12. Practices
- a. At least two Skill Building clinics will be held prior to the beginning of the regular season. Topics to be covered include (but are not limited to):
    - i. *Rules and Strategy of the Game*
    - ii. *Infield Drills*
    - iii. *Outfield Drills*
    - iv. *Batting Skills*
  - b. A scrimmage will be held one week prior to the start of the regular season. This will be coordinated by the Assistant Commissioner.
  - c. Team practices are at the discretion of each team coach and are not considered an activity of SSBL-Madison.

### 4.0 Competitive Division

1. Teams – Only individuals will be allowed to register for the competitive division during the 2006 season. No team registration will be allowed. After the 2006 season, the General Council will vote to determine whether to allow for team registration during subsequent seasons.
  - a. Teams will be formed from the pool of registered players by the Membership & Fundraising Committee, with an emphasis on maintaining an equal balance of skill sets on all teams.
  - b. All efforts will be made to accommodate “reasonable” player requests.
2. Player Eligibility – An individual will be eligible to play in any scheduled game for the team they are assigned, provided they are a registered player, with the following exception:
  - a. Individuals on the “Player Suspension / Ineligibility Statement” that are currently ineligible or serving a suspension.
3. Players – The needs of the team shall outweigh the needs of the individual players.
  - a. The coach of each team does not need to ensure that equal playing time is allotted to all players who desire equal playing time.
4. Coaches – Coaches will be responsible for their player’s understanding of the rules of the game and their behavior on the field.
  - a. Coaches must ensure that all players fully understand the rules of the game.
  - b. Coaches should proactively teach their players strategy that will improve individual and team performance.
5. Player Substitution – If a team is not able to field a minimum of eight players on their roster to play the game, that team forfeits. Registered players from another team in the Competitive Division may act as a substitute player to provide a team up to ten players, provided:
  - a. If a team(s) does not meet the eight player minimum, at the discretion of the coaches, the teams may still play the game for fun, with the opposing team having the opportunity to provide a player for substitution first.
    - i. *If the opposing team does not wish to supply a substitute from their team, a player may be chosen from any other team in the league, who must be approved by the opposing team coach.*
    - ii. *Both teams will receive a loss if both of the teams does not have a minimum of eight players.*
  - b. If the team(s) meet the eight player minimum requirement to play, substitutes may be used at the discretion of the coaches, to bring each team’s roster up to ten players.
    - i. *Substitutes do not need to be approved by the Assistant Commissioner or Commissioner.*
6. Playing Regulations – All games shall be conducted in accordance with MSCR rules for Men’s Slow Pitch Softball (see Appendix A) with the following exception:

# SSBL-Madison

## Softball Code

- a. Men and Women may compete on the same team.
7. Player Disqualification or Suspension – A player may be disqualified or deemed ineligible (and placed on the “Player Suspension / Ineligibility Statement”) for any of the following violations:
  - a. Unsportsmanlike Conduct on the Field, in the Dug Out, or while in the stands.
    - i. *Penalty – Automatic Suspension for two games.*
  - b. Commission of Fraud such as playing under an assumed name, falsifying the Player Application Form, or violation of the “Under 18” policy.
    - i. *Penalty – Automatic Suspension for rest of season.*
  - c. Knowingly violating any applicable rule in the SSBL-Madison Bylaws or Softball Code
    - i. *Penalty – Recommendation of the Softball Code Committee.*
8. Player Disqualification or Suspension Procedures
  - a. Violations can be identified by the following:
    - i. *Umpire can make a determination on Unsportsmanlike Conduct while the player is on the field or in the dugout.*
    - ii. *Violations can be reported to any Coach or Board Member. The Coach or Board Member must immediately report the incident to the Softball Code Committee for review.*
  - b. Any violation that holds an automatic penalty will be enforced immediately.
  - c. Any violation that does not hold an automatic penalty will be reviewed by the Softball Code committee within two days of learning of the violation. The Softball Code Committee will issue the penalty to the player. That penalty will be enforced unless overturned by the Ethics Committee.
    - i. *The player and coach must be notified of any penalty at least two days prior to the next scheduled game.*
    - ii. *The player may appeal the ruling to the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee will attempt to convene prior to the start of the next game.*
  - d. All violations will be reviewed at the next scheduled General Council Meeting.
9. Schedule – The schedule will be set by the Competitive League Coordinator for 2006 (with the direction of the Assistant Commissioner). Once posted, changes to the schedule will not be allowed, with the exception of weather delays.
10. Incident Weather – The Competitive League Coordinator will notify team coaches of weather cancellations by 3:00pm on game day for 2006.
  - a. Coaches must notify each player at their registered “Game Day Phone Number” to inform them of the cancellation.
11. Equipment
  - a. Fields – Prepped fields will be provided by MSCR.
  - b. Bases – Safety bases will be provided by MSCR.
    - i. A double first base will be used.
    - ii. A Black Mat will be used to determine Strikes / Balls and for use by the Runner when tagging home.
  - c. Bats – MSCR maintain a list of Banned bats, which will be applicable to the competitive league. Bats will be inspected by the umpire prior to the start of the game. Any individual caught using an unapproved bat will be called out and may be required to serve a disciplinary suspension at the discretion of the Softball Code Committee.
  - d. Balls – SSBL-Madison will supply game balls. The balls will have a 0.440 rated core with restricted flight. Balls do not need to be stamped with the MSCR logo.
  - e. Uniforms – For 2006, players will not have uniforms. After the 2006 season, the General Council will vote to determine whether to provide team uniforms during subsequent seasons.
12. Practices
  - a. A scrimmage will be held one week prior to the start of the regular season. This will be coordinated by the Competitive League Coordinator for 2006.
  - b. Team practices are at the discretion of each team coach and are not considered an activity of SSBL-Madison.

### 5.0 Special Circumstances

1. There may occasionally be situations that arise that need an immediate resolution that are not covered in the SSBL-Madison Softball Code. In these situations, the matter can be resolved by one of the following:

# SSBL-Madison

## Softball Code

- a. Two members of the Board may make a temporary decision.
  - b. If option (a.) is not available, 50% of the coaches can make a decision.
  - c. If option (a.) and (b.) are not available, the Umpire will make the decision.
2. Once a decision for a “Special Circumstance” has been made, that decision will set precedence until the General Council can amend the rules.
- 6.0 Amendments** – Amendments to the Softball Code of SSBL-Madison can be done by a simple majority vote of a General Council Meeting. The vote to amend the Softball Code cannot be done with a secret ballot.