

Grey Bruce Minor Softball Association – 2023 Rules

Mission and Objectives

Our mission is to make softball available to as many youth as possible in our communities.

The objectives of the Grey Bruce Minor Softball Association are as follows:

- To promote and govern the GBMSA and our teams.
- To teach and encourage fair play and good sportsmanship.
- To encourage and support the participation of all players in minor ball.

Executive

The executive shall consist of: a president, a secretary/treasurer and one member from each centre which has a team(s) playing within the association.

The term of office for the President and Secretary/treasurer is one year. Any extension to this time must be agreed upon by the executive and the individual.

Any member of the executive may nominate a member for office. No person shall be eligible for the position of President or Secretary/treasurer that has not been on the executive for at least one full year.

Registration and Fees

- The president will determine the time and place of all meetings, and a minimum of two weeks notice will be given to all members in good standing.
- The present executive will set team fees and number of games for the following season
- The decision to play a tournament format or a playdown format will be decided at the same meeting that all teams are registered.
- \$150.00 per team
- A \$100.00 bond fee and team registration fees must be paid in full to be considered a member in good standing
- Any community not deemed to be in good standing has no rights. All financial obligations must be met before that community may re-apply to be a member of the league.

League Rules

1. Your centre rep is responsible to ensure all coaches and umpires are made aware of the GBMSA rules.

2. Centres are not required to hand in birth certificates with team lists but they must be available if requested by the league.

A standard league roster form will be issued and used by all centres, with all players full names, birth dates, full mailing address and phone number. Rosters will be mailed or hand delivered to the President before June 15th. Incomplete or illegible forms will not be accepted. Failure to do so will result in teams forfeiting games until such list is received. If the list is not received by July 1, the President will rule on ineligibility for the year-end tournament.

3. No player shall be added to the list after July 1st without following the League grievance procedure.

4. A player can be signed to only one centre, unless they are playing in a higher division with a HC team (OASA, PWSA, ORSA) – then may play in their home centre as well as the HC centre team playing up.

5. A player can be signed to only one player's list (see HCT Rules for only exception).
6. **PLAYERS HAVE TO PLAY 4 GAMES BEFORE THEY CAN PLAY IN YEAR END PLAYOFFS/TOURNAMENT - MUST use players full name (first and last name) in the scorebook.**
7. We are a House League and all players who want to play must be given the opportunity to play (no tryouts or hand picked teams – see HCT Rules for only exception).
8. Teams may affiliate players from teams in categories below within their own centres (see HCT Rules for only AP exception). When using affiliated players a team can only play up to 12 players.
9. Any team wishing to cancel a game must give 24 hours notice. In case of cancellation due to weather, the home team must give the visiting team a minimum 2 hours notice (or more if travelling team requires it). The travelling/away team cannot cancel a game due to weather (it is recommended both coaches communicate if there are any weather related doubts).
10. **PRESIDENT WILL MAKE A DECISION WITHIN 24 HOURS IF AN OVERAGE PLAYER IS CAUGHT IN THE WRONG POSITION DURING A GAME – THE GAME IS AUTOMATICALLY FORFEITED ONCE INVESTIGATED BY THE PRESIDENT – HOWEVER THE CENTRE SHOULD NOTIFY THE UMPs THAT THEY ARE PLAYING UNDER PROTEST.**
11. All rescheduled games must be arranged within 72 hours of the cancellation date. It is the responsibility of the home team to reschedule. If the game is not rescheduled within 72 hours, the home team forfeits the game (forfeits must be approved by president).
12. **IF A TEAM FORFEITS 3 GAMES IN THE SEASON THEY ARE OUT OF THE LEAGUE –WARNING AFTER THE 2ND OFFENCE IS TO BE GIVEN TO THE OFFENDING CENTRE - AND TEAM WILL NOT BE ELIGIIBLE FOR PLAYOFFS IF 3 GAMES ARE MISSED**
13. Schedules must end at least one week prior to the playoff tournament. Any games played after this date will not count toward league standings. All win/loss/ties to be reported to the president at least one week prior to the tournament.
14. Every effort must be made by teams to travel to all away games. If a team is determined, by the President, to be unwilling to travel, then that team will be fined \$100.00 and the President will rule on ineligibility for the year-end tournament.
15. Any player or coach ejected from a game must leave the ballpark and is suspended for 1 additional game unless further discipline is warranted. After a second ejection of a player or coach during the season/play-offs, the repeat offender is suspended for 3 additional games unless further discipline is warranted. After a third ejection, by a player or coach, during the season/play-offs, the multiple offender is suspended for the remainder of the season and play-offs. Multiple offending coaches must file a grievance with the GBMSA executive before obtaining eligibility to return to the League in any capacity in the future.
16. Any coach, manager, convenor found not following GBMSA rules after being directed to do so will result in a suspension from GBMSA by the President for the remainder of the season (additional suspension time may be added by the GBMSA Executive).
17. All exceptions to GBMSA rules must be approved by the executive at the spring team declaration meeting.

18. All players will play in their closest centre. An exception can be made by the president if a player has a disability. If a player chooses to play on a higher competition team in GBMSA, that team will play one level higher but each player must choose their home centre as their primary team. Players are to play in their closest centre (from their home to the ball diamond). A gray area 3 kilometres wide (measured half way between centres, and one and one half kilometres each way), will allow those players to choose which centre they will play with. All girl teams are the exception to the rule. Players that played GBMS in the 2011 season have the option of being grandfathered in with the community where they played last year. If a community does not have enough players to form a team at a certain level the players have the right of choice, to be released to the next closest centre to their residence, or the next closest centre to their primary centre (if this centre can accommodate the players). A 1 year release form will be signed by the primary centre and the player/parent and be submitted to the league. All released players must return to their home centre the following year. THE TOWN POST OFFICE TO BE USED WHEN FIGURING OUT OF DISTANCES (CENTRES WITHOUT POST OFFICES WILL USE THE DIAMONDS)

19. No player is allowed to wear METAL spikes at any age group.

Higher Competition Team Rules

A team is considered an HC team when more than six players play together on a competitive team as well as their GBMSA team. HC Teams are eligible to play in the GBMSA if all HC Team rules are followed:

1. HCT rules apply to all levels.
2. HC Teams must play up one level (i.e.: U9 HCT would play at a GBMSA U11 level).
3. HC Teams are not eligible to play in GBMSA play-off tournaments (their play-offs are in a different league/tournaments).
4. If an HC Team is comprised of players from multiple teams, then the teams from which the players are drawn are still eligible for full GBMSA team status (i.e.: 2 Squirt teams from one centre could have 6 players from each of their teams to comprise an HC Team which would play at a GBMSA Pee Wee level – the 2 Squirt teams are treated as normal GBMSA Squirt teams).
5. If an HC Team is comprised of players from multiple teams, then the players must play at both levels with the lower level having first priority, if a game conflict occurs (players are not eligible to play on an HCT only, and they must play on a regular GBMSA team at their age level)
6. If Rule 4 is applied then those players will be signed to two teams – their regular team as well as the HC Team playing up one level (this is the only exception where GBMSA allows a player to be signed to two teams).
7. If Rule 5 is applied then those players are not eligible to be affiliated players (AP) during the regular season.
8. HCT exceptions must be approved by the executive at the spring team declaration meeting.

Playing Rules

The GBMSA will follow the Softball Canada Rule Book with the addition of the following:

1. GBMSA Rules will be enforced when different from Softball Canada Rules.
2. Each home team must have two 'good' balls for U7-U11, for U13 and up the home team must provide one NEW ball and have at least one good ball for each game.

3. No new inning shall start after one hour and twenty minutes. Innings 1 - 4, will have a 5 run maximum, and innings 5, 6, & 7 will be open to a maximum of 10 runs. Mercy rule will be 15 after 3 complete innings or 10 runs after 5 complete innings. Centres that must use a 'maximum game length' (1 hour 30 minute maximum) must inform opposition coaches before the game.
4. A team may play with a minimum of 8 players. U7-U11 divisions, there is NO penalty for playing with 8 players, U13 and older divisions will play with an automatic out in the 9th position. Seven or less players is a forfeit.
5. All teams will be given a 15 minute grace period from the scheduled game start time. If a centre cannot field a team within this time frame then they must forfeit the game and are responsible for paying the umpires fee. This will be done through the league from their bond.
6. All communities and teams within the association are required to supply and use official safety bags.
7. Infield fly rule does not apply to U7-U9.
8. Unlimited substitution in all levels.
9. U7-U11 games are up to 5 innings.
10. U13 and up games are up to 7 innings.
11. In the case of a rainout game for U7-U11, 3 complete innings completes a game. In U13 and up 4 complete innings completes a game.
12. All children who register in their respective centres will be given the opportunity to play.
13. U7 to U11 may add a tenth fielder if agreed upon by both coaches prior to the start of the game.
14. GBMSA will be using the most recent non approved list ASA bat list at the beginning of the season. If a player is found using an ASA non approved bat during a game, (using ASA non approve bat is an appeal call) the game will end immediately and the offending team forfeits. The bat is taken by the umpire and given to the league president. The bat status is determined and if found to be a non approved bat, then the league will hold the bat until the fall meeting. The bat will be returned to the offending coach/player at this meeting. If the bat is found to be a GBMSA approved bat, then the league will return the bat and the game will be replayed and the league will reimburse the home team for the costs of this game. If a second violation occurs with a team, then the same protocol is followed as in a first offence. If the bat is found to be a GBMSA non approved bat, then the team is suspended from league play for the remainder of the season and play-offs. The offending coach and player are suspended from the league until the coach or player attend a full executive meeting and successfully appeal their suspension. Tyke and Mite teams may only use approved aluminum bats.

"Bats must comply with the current ASA bat standards" (Rule 3 Sec.1 Page 148 Official Fast Pitch Softball Rules) The bat barrel should be stamped with the ASA seal (ASA 2000, ASA 2004, ASA-Approved). If the approved seal cannot be read due to wear or age of the bat, the bat may still be permitted, if it is in compliance with all other Softball Canada rules (i.e. not on the ASA non-approved list).

Also considered illegal are;

"Metal bats with end caps that have been altered, or are not permanently sealed, bat barrels that

have an audible rattle when shaken, or bat barrels that are dented or show signs of excessive wear".

15. The first inning there will be three warm-up pitches allowed and one pitch each inning thereafter or at the umpires discretion. Warm up balls on the infield only in the first inning.
16. All batters in every age group will wear face masks while in the on deck circle, at bat, and on base.
17. All pitchers in every age group must wear protective masks.

Umpires

1. Umpires for U7-U11 do NOT have to be carded but it is recommended by GBMSA.
2. U7 – U9 Must have one Umpire for the game.
3. U11-U17 – Must have two umpires for the game.
4. U13 and up must have at least two (2) umpires, one carded umpire behind the plate for all regular season games and can use an uncarded umpire for the bases.
5. 2 carded umpires must be used for U15, U17 and for all playoff and tournament games. (U7, U9 tournament games will use 1 carded umpire for preliminary games and 2 umpires (one carded) for semifinal and final games).
6. All calls from the umpire are final.
7. Carded umpires must be carded by the WOAA, or Softball Ontario, or Softball Canada.
8. At the first pitch the umpires must say the start time and remind coaches that there will be no new inning begin after 1 hour 20 minutes. Last inning will not be announced. Scorekeepers must right the announced start time in each score book.

Pitching Rules

1. For U7 When pitching to your own team, there will be only five pitches allowed strikes or balls. The coach will pitch to his own team.
2. For U9 When pitching to your own team, there will be only five pitches allowed with no strikes unless the batter swings the bat. Player pitch to their own team for the first inning, coach pitches to their own team afterward.
3. For U7 & U9 if the batter hits the pitcher, it is considered no pitch. When pitching to your own team, the offensive team will still use a player in the pitchers mound and the pitcher will receive the ball from this player.
4. For U11 (formerly mite) no one single pitcher may pitch an entire game. A minimum of two pitchers must be used through out the course of the game. One or more other pitchers must pitch at least one full inning.
5. Under no circumstances is an overage player allowed to pitch at any level. Any overage player found pitching will result in a forfeit and the offending pitcher and/or coach may be removed from League play (disciplinary action will be ruled on after grievance procedure is followed).
6. IF A PITCHER HITS 3 BATTERS THEY GET A WARNING AND IF A 4th BATTER IS HIT THE PITCHER IS PULLED FROM THE PITCHING POSITION FOR THE GAME.

Pitching & base distances:

U7	30 feet, 45 feet
U9	30 feet, 45 feet
U11	35 feet, 45 feet
U13	38 feet, 55 feet
U15	42 feet, 60 feet
U17	46 feet, 60 feet

Base Stealing

1. For U7, U9 if the ball goes out of play, the runner will get 2 bases from the time of the throw. If the ball is thrown over the head or past first or third when an attempt is made by the defensive team to throw out a runner, the runners can advance 1 base with the liability to be put out. The same situation applies to a throw at second base. If a ball is thrown a second time, during one play, and is not caught, the runners are not eligible to advance. If the ball is thrown to the pitcher, runners cannot advance, even if the pitcher does not catch the ball. For all other cases Tykes cannot advance without a fair hit ball. Tyke cannot run on the third strike.
2. For U11 if the ball goes out of play, the runner will get two bases from the time of the throw. If the ball is thrown over the head or past first, or second, when an attempt is made by the defensive team to throw out a runner the runners can advance 1 base with the liability to be put out. If a ball is thrown a second time, during one play, and is not caught, the runners are not eligible to advance. A runner on third base must be hit or forced home. Mites may steal 2nd and 3rd base but cannot steal home or run on third strike. Runners cannot leave the base until the ball crosses the plate.
3. For U13 and up all stealing is allowed after the ball leaves the pitchers hand. Squirt and up can run on the third strike (at runners own risk).

Levels & Ages

1. All players are eligible to play at their own level or above (please see HCT Rules for only exception).
2. Players may not play down a level unless all rules for Overage Players are followed.

Level	Age as of Jan 1	Born In
U7	under 7	2016, 2017
U9	under 9	2015, 2014
U11	under 11	2013, 2012
U13	under 13	2011, 2010
U15	under 15	2009, 2008
U17	under 17	2007, 2006

Overage Players

An overage player is defined as being one year over the age category.

1. You cannot play as an overage player if your community offers a team in your age category.
2. Only three overage players may be signed to one roster.

3. Overagers cannot play first base, catch or pitch, . Only two overage players on the field at any one time. **Only one overager on the infield.** Max 3 players per team.
4. An overage U17 cannot pitch.
5. All overage players must be approved by the executive at the spring team declaration meeting. Discretion will be used when considering a special needs child.
6. All overage players must be identified to the opposing coach and plate umpire prior to the start of a game (failure to do so may result in a forfeit of the game, after proper grievance procedures are followed).
7. If an illegal player is used during the regular season, a \$200.00 fine is imposed on the offending centre (after proper grievance procedure is followed). The offending team will forfeit all games until the fine is paid in full.

Tournaments

1. All rules for tournaments must be posted before the tournament starts (time limits, rain out rules, alternate diamonds etc.)
2. The host centre is responsible for getting the standings from the president, obtaining a complete players list for all teams, for hiring carded umpires for the tournament, plus supply one new ball per game.
3. The League will reimburse the host centre for umpire and ball costs in full, plus partial or full cost of diamond rental (upon league approval). If a host centre does not have to pay for diamond costs, they may ask for up to \$150.00 to cover other tournament related expenses. All other costs of running a tournament are the responsibility of the host centre.
4. The League will supply the Champion, consolation Champion, and Runner-Up Players with awards in a standard Champion/Consolation tournament (four teams in total). The League will supply the Champion and Runner-Up Player with awards in a double elimination tournament (two teams in total). The League will supply the Champion, and Runner-Up players with awards in a playdown style play-offs (two teams in total).
5. During any final tournament the higher ranking team will have home game.
6. **ANY PLAYOFF CHAMPIONSHIP OR CONSOLATION GAMES WILL PLAY ALL INNINGS IN FULL UNLESS THE RAIN OUT RULE HAS TO BE APPLIED**
7. In the event of a tie game during the tournament, the international tie breaking rule applies (last available batter that inning starts as a runner at second base).
8. Any player or coach ejected from a game must leave the ballpark and is suspended for 1 additional game unless further discipline is warranted.
9. The centre winning the tournament will be responsible to host that division tournament the next year. Once a centre has hosted the same age category playoff tournament for two consecutive years – on the third consecutive winning year the runner up community will host.
10. If a centre is unable to field a full team for the tournament the President must be notified 2 weeks prior to the tournament. Failure to do so will result in a \$200 fine. If the remaining players wish to participate in the tournament and the centre has no players from below from which to AP, the President may allow the team to play with additional players from other centres (underage – AP up). Overage players may not be used at this time (unless approved by League at spring meeting). The team utilising other Centre AP players automatically forfeits the game (the game is played and the team utilising the other centre APs moves to the losing side of the tournament schedule).

11. AT THE END OF A GAME IF THE HOME TEAM IS AHEAD THEN THE LAST ½ INNING WILL NOT BE PLAYED

12. If a team does not field a team, the coach of the other team will have the choice of which side of the tournament they will play next (champion or consolation side – if it is the first game). The team, which did not show, will pay a \$200 fine.

Using an illegal player during the tournament will result in team expulsion from the tournament and a \$200 fine.

13. If a player(s) have been missed on a player's list, the play(s) may play if the team can provide proof of eligibility - scorebook indicating they played at least 4 regular season games.

14. The League may choose to offset tournament host losses due to teams not showing and/or being expelled (after proper grievance procedure is followed).

15. All games to be played at host community-**no exceptions**

17. No new inning shall start after one hour and twenty minutes, Innings 1 - 4, will have a 5 run maximum, innings 5, 6, & 7 will be open to a maximum of 10 runs. Mercy rule will be 15 after 3 complete innings or 10 runs after 5 complete innings. Tournament games can NOT be curfewed, if the inning has started within the proper time frame, the home team must complete their at-bat. U7, U9 games will be no new innings after 50 minutes, or a 5 inning maximum.

18. The defending champion team/centre is responsible for producing the championship trophy, to be awarded to the new champion. Failure to do so will result in a \$200 fine.

Grievances, Protests and Changes

1. All grievances must be made to the President of the league. They must be made in writing by the centre rep. No calls or letters from coaches and/or parents will be accepted.
2. All grievances must be made within 72 hours of the incident occurring.
3. A \$25.00 fee must accompany the letter of complaint.
4. The president will contact two or three non-involved centre reps and rule on the grievance/protest/change. The President may choose to contact the executive to set up a meeting to discuss the issue.
5. All protests regarding League or Softball Canada rules violations must be made to the umpire at the time the violation occurs (then proper grievance procedure must be followed).

2023 Play-Off Hosts & Dates:

U7 – Saugeen First Nations

U9 – Tara

U11 – Chesley (August 12)

U13 – Chesley

U15 – Tara (Play downs August 26)