



SUNCOAST SOFTBALL LEAGUE PLAYER RATINGS PROCEDURE

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Suncoast Softball League, Inc.

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Chapter 1 Overview

Section 1 Introduction

Identifying the skill level of players competing in the Suncoast Softball League is a critical responsibility of the coaches and managers who witness their player's abilities every week on the softball fields. Our mission statement requires us to provide for a safe environment for all our players. Making every effort possible to place players in divisions commiserate with the skills they exhibit to help mitigate safety concerns.

The definition of data, hereaunto referred to as data, in this section is any information used by the ratings committee to establish a proper rating.

1. Data may come from hitting statistics, experience of the ratings committee applied to the observations of the player, ratings and manager clinic training and observation as applied to the player as one watches the player in games.
2. All of the skillsets being verified by the ratings committee are subject to interpretation, including batting, running, throwing and fielding as defined by NAGAAA.
3. Data may come from league or tournament games. Data sent from other tournaments may be used to supplement the Rating Committee's observations but may not be used alone to adjust a rating.

Section 2 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to create a ratings guideline which provides a standard for the Suncoast Softball League to follow when addressing changes to a player's rating. The Suncoast Softball League's Player Ratings Procedure is used to document the required steps to perform the following functions:

- a. Attending the mandatory Manager Ratings Clinic;
- b. Establishing a new player's rating in our League;
- c. Monitoring and reporting changes to a player's skill level;
- d. Evaluating a player independent of a player's coach or manager;
- e. Changing a player's rating;
- f. Appealing a change to a player's rating; and
- g. Resolving conflicts with the use of this procedure.

Section 3 Scope

This procedure will be used by the Suncoast Softball League, inclusive of its officers, committees, and all team coaches and managers, to standardize how ratings are initially established, updated and appealed.

References

- a. Suncoast Softball League Constitution
- b. Suncoast Softball League Bylaws

Section 4 Roles and Responsibilities

1. Players

- a. Read and understand the league's mission statement;
- b. Sign the Player Waiver, Release of Liability and Indemnification Agreement; and
- c. Pay all fees associated with playing softball each season within our league.

2. Team Coach or Manager

- a. Read and understand the league's mission statement;
- b. Read and understand the league's Constitution and Bylaws;
- c. Attend the mandatory Manager Ratings Clinic at the beginning of each season and gain an improved understanding of how to assess a player's skill level based on NAGAAA's Player Rating Guidelines;
- d. Monitor the skills of all players on his/her team and notify the Ratings Committee whenever a player exhibits changes to any of his/her skills;
- e. Monitor players on opposing teams and notify the Ratings Committee of any safety concerns related to possible inappropriate ratings; and
- f. Meet with the Executive Council during a Rating Appeal Meeting to appeal any ratings decision made by the Ratings Committee which he/she is not in agreement.

3. Ratings Committee

- a. Serve a one-year term;
- b. Read and understand the League's mission statement;
- c. Read and understand the League's Constitution and Bylaws;
- d. Attend the mandatory Manager Ratings Clinic at the beginning of their tenure or upon changes made to the Player Ratings Procedure and gain an improved understanding of how to assess a player's skill level based on NAGAAA's Player Rating Guidelines;
- e. Monitor the skill levels of players within their division for safety concerns related to possible inappropriate ratings;
- f. Solicit feedback from all coaches and managers throughout season to determine if there are safety concerns associated with a player's rating;
- g. Document specific details (e.g., dates, times, offensive/defensive skills exhibited) associated with the reasons for changing a player's rating;
- h. Notify the Commissioner when a player's rating is being changed or not being changed, pursuant to a properly submitted request, so that the Commissioner can notify the player's coach or manager and allow for an appeal to be made by said coach or manager to the Executive Council within seven (7) calendar days of the notification;
- i. Conclude all evaluations and ratings determinations prior to the start of the last week of scheduled game play for each division; and
- j. Provide the NAGAAA Representative and the Commissioner with all final player ratings from all teams participating in the fall or spring seasons by the Sunday following the last week of scheduled game play for each division.

4. Executive Council

- a. Schedule a Ratings Appeal Meeting with the Ratings Committee members and the coach or manager whenever a Ratings Committee's decision regarding a player's rating has been appealed;
- b. The NAGAAA Representative will serve on the Ratings Committee as the Ratings Committee Chairperson and only gets a vote in the event of a tie;
- c. NAGAAA Representative will insure that all player ratings from the teams playing in the Spring Season are submitted into the NAGAAA Database by July 15th each year;
- d. Monitor league adherence to the Player Ratings Procedure; and
- e. Provide leadership and direction to the Ratings Committee as requested.

5. Team Council

- a. Monitor league adherence to the Player Ratings Procedure; and
- b. Provide leadership and direction to the Ratings Committee as requested.

6. Secretary and NAGAAA Representative

- a. At the end of the spring season, update the SSL Ratings document posted on the SSL Website and post the NAGAAA Ratings as they were submitted to NAGAAA;
- b. Update any new players added to the SSL membership with their rating points as given after they have completed their 3rd week of play and the coach has sent the player's rating to the Ratings Committee Chairperson; and
- c. Update any changes to player's current ratings due to appeals.

Chapter 2 Procedure

The section provides the step-by-step procedures to be followed when determining a player's skills.

Section 1 Attending the Mandatory Manager Ratings Clinic

Every coach or manager is held responsible for their respective players' ratings and therefore is required to attend a Manager Ratings Clinic upon becoming a new coach or manager, or after any NAGAAA based changes to the player ratings process are made and the NAGAAA representative calls for such a clinic. Failure to attend a Manager Ratings Clinic results in that team losing its ability to appeal any ratings changes which are made by the Ratings Committee throughout that season of play.

Section 2 Rating a New Player

- A. A new player is defined to be an individual who has either never played in the SSL, except for summer season, or whose rating in the NAGAAA database is more than two years old. All new players are required to

attend a New Player Skills Assessment Clinic (NPSAC) prior to being allowed onto the field of play. The Ratings Committee will schedule and conduct the NPSACs in order to provide an initial assessment of each new player and determine placement in one of the League's various divisions. Coaches or managers attending a NPSAC to support a new player may not participate in the NPSAC in any way including, but not limited to, coaching players during the NPSAC or recruiting players to their team. Any coach or manager engaging in inappropriate conduct will be asked to leave by an Executive Council member and must comply with the request. After a new player has been assessed and determined to be able to play in a particular division, the Assistant Commissioner for that division shall help the player find a team if he or she does not already have a team on which to play.

- B. Once the player is placed on a team, it is the responsibility of the coach or manager to create a rating based on monitoring the new player and report the initial rating back to the Ratings Committee once the new player has three (3) weeks of play. When determining the number of weeks of play for new players, all games played count, including against teams from other divisions of the SSL.
- C. Any new player who does not have a rating submitted by their coach or manager after that player's third week of game play shall be deemed ineligible to play (i.e., a member not in good standing) until such time as the coach or manager submits a rating, as specified in the SSL NAGAAA Player Ratings Procedure and the SSL Bylaws.

Section 3 Monitoring and Reporting Player Rating Changes

- A. Throughout each softball season, the player's coach or manager will monitor the abilities of each player on their team based on the questions found in NAGAAA's Player Rating Guidelines. The NAGAAA Player Rating Guidelines provide a series of questions which, when answered in the affirmative, add to a player's overall rating, and thus reflects his or her skill level.
- B. If a player is new to the SSL, the coach or manager is responsible for creating that new player's rating by the third week of game play for that player, as stated in this document. Once a new player's rating has been submitted to the Ratings Committee, it is up to the Ratings Committee to either accept or change that player's rating. If the Ratings Committee changes a new player's rating from what was submitted by the coach or manager, the changed rating be submitted to the SSL Commissioner who will then report it back to the coach or manager. A new player's rating is not eligible for appeal during their first season of play.
- C. If a coach or manager wishes to change a player's current NAGAAA rating, the coach or manager must contact the chairperson of the Ratings Committee using the Player Ratings Change Request form. If the Ratings Committee approves a request to change a player's rating, that decision will be forwarded to the Secretary to update the SSL Ratings Sheet. If the request to change a player's rating is denied, the coach or manager may accept that decision or appeal the decision to the Executive Council.
- D. Whenever there is an approved change to a player's rating, either by the Ratings Committee or following an appeal to the Executive Council, the Secretary must update the SSL Ratings Sheet with the final rating. New players who are added to the SSL Ratings Sheet will have "NEW" in the "Year" column to indicate that the player does not yet have a confirmed NAGAAA rating and that their rating is subject to review by the Ratings Committee at any time. At the end of the new player's first spring season, when the player's rating has been approved by the Ratings Committee or following an appeal to the Executive Council, the "NEW" modifier will be changed to the appropriate year.

Section 4 Evaluating Any Player's Rating

Throughout each softball season, any coach or manager can monitor the abilities of players that their team is competing against. If the coach or manager is concerned that an opposing player's rating may not be correct, the coach or manager should speak first with the player's coach or manager and share the evaluation. If any coach or manager is still concerned over an opposing player's rating, the details regarding what had been observed and when need to be reported to the Ratings Committee for further evaluation using the Player Ratings Change Request form provided on the SSL website for such requests, supported by the signatures of two other coaches or managers from other teams in the same division. The form may be submitted in person or by email to the chairperson of the Ratings Committee.

Section 5 Changing a Player's Rating

- A. The Ratings Committee will make a determination based on objective evidence collected over a period of time that a player's rating needs to either be raised, lowered, or remain unchanged. This objective data can be provided by using one or more of the following sources:
 1. The player's coach or manager who is requesting a rating be considered for a change;
 2. Any coach or manager whose team has competed against the player in question; or
 3. The Ratings Committee itself through observing and recording its evaluations.
- B. If a coach or manager wishes to change their player's existing NAGAAA rating, the coach or manager must fill out and submit, in person or by email, a Player Ratings Change Request form to the chairperson of the Ratings Committee. If the Ratings Committee approves the rating change, the chairperson will notify the League Secretary and the rating will be updated in the SSL Ratings Sheet. If the change is denied, the coach or manager can either accept the denied rating change or appeal the decision to the Executive Council. Once the spring season is in the final two weeks, no Player Ratings Change Request forms will be accepted. Forms may be submitted again at the start of the fall season.
- C. If a change is made to a player's rating by the Ratings Committee, that determination will be reported to the League Commissioner by the chairperson of the Ratings Committee. The League Commissioner will then notify the coach or manager of the team which the player is a member within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of the Ratings Committee determination.
- D. For purposes of this procedure, any player who is not currently playing with a team in the SSL and who has a valid NAGAAA rating may have his or her coach or manager of the team on which he or she wishes to play submit a Player Ratings Change Request form to the Ratings Committee. The player must play in the appropriate division, as indicated by his or her current rating, to allow the Ratings Committee an opportunity for a proper evaluation. If the Ratings Committee approves the ratings change, the Secretary will be notified and the rating will be updated to the SSL Ratings Sheet. If the change is denied, the coach or manager can either accept the denied rating change or follow the appropriate actions to file an appeal to the Executive Council. No Player Ratings Change Request forms will be accepted once the spring season has entered into the final two weeks of play. Forms can be submitted again at the start of the fall season.
- E. All changes made by the Ratings Committee to any player's rating must be completed prior to the last week of game play for that specific division. The coach or manager of a player whose rating is changed by the Ratings Committee, through the processes outlined herein, must be notified of such change by the League Commissioner prior to the last week of game play for that specific division.

Section 6 Transfer Players From Other NAGAAA Leagues

- A. A transfer player is defined to be an individual who has previously played, within two years of transferring to the Suncoast Softball League (SSL), in another NAGAAA-sanctioned league and has received a rating from that league based on the NAGAAA ratings system. If a transfer player wishes to play in the SSL, their rating, as it exists in the NAGAAA database at the time of the transfer, will be their rating for SSL divisional assignment and the transfer player will not be required to attend a New Player Skills Assessment Clinic (NPSAC). If an individual has played in another NAGAAA-sanctioned league, but not within two years of transferring to the SSL, he or she must attend a NPSAC and go through the new player process, as outlined in this document.
- B. It is up to the Ratings Committee to either accept or change the transfer player's rating based upon observations of game play.

Section 7 Appealing a Player's Rating

- A. A decision by the Ratings Committee is final if not appealed. The coach or manager is given seven (7) calendar days to file an appeal with the Executive Council upon receipt of notification from the League's Commissioner. Once an appeal has been requested, the Executive Council has seven (7) calendar days to reply back to the coach or manager with a date and time which has been scheduled for the Ratings Appeal Meeting.
- B. If there is an appeal, the Ratings Committee chairperson will submit data to the Executive Council on the player(s) under appeal in advance of the meeting, but need not attend the appeal meeting. The coach or manager of the player(s) under appeal will be present at the appeal meeting to present evidence of the ability of their player(s) to refute data from the Ratings Committee. Deference must be given to the Ratings

Committee decision, and the coach or manager appealing must disprove data collected by the Ratings Committee members.

- C. If an Executive Council member's rating is under appeal, that Executive Council member shall recuse himself or herself from discussions, after the information presented during the appeal meeting, about his or her rating only and does not retain his or her vote on the appeal decision.
- D. A final decision is then made by a majority vote of the Executive Council, with the Commissioner only having a vote when there is a tie.
- E. If a player's rating is under appeal and the rating change will affect either the player's division or the team total cap, loss of such an appeal will result in the forfeit of any games in which the player has played while under appeal

Section 8 Resolving Conflicts with Using This Procedure

The Executive Council and Team Council are responsible for monitoring league adherence to this procedure. As is the case with any league procedures, conflicts are sure to arise which will need to be resolved by the Executive Council. If the conflict cannot be handled by the Executive Council in a timely manner, the Team Council will intercede to assist in the resolution. Often times a conflict to a procedure provides an opportunity for improving it so that future such conflicts do not continue to surface within the league. It is the responsibility of the general membership of the league to identify possible areas of improvement within this procedure and bring them to the attention of the coach/manager, Team Council and/or Executive Council.