

DACSL League Conventions

What follows are some conventions for the operation of the Donegal Area Church Softball League (DACSL). These items are not addressed in our league bylaws but they contain procedural information useful to the league managers.

1. By tradition, at the start of each new season the top team in each division from the previous year moves up one division and the bottom team moves down one division. Some flexibility is allowed. We typically make final decisions on division alignments at the second league meeting.
2. Game time limits. Our time limit rule applies only to 6:15 games on unlit fields. No time limits will apply in 7:00 games, on Sundays, or under the lights. (2009)
The **time limit rule** works as follows. The home plate umpire is the official timekeeper. He starts the clock when the game begins. No new inning may start after the 50-minute mark (or 60 minutes for games on or after the 3rd Monday in May.) Once an inning has started it is completed even if the game goes past the time limit. (2002, 2009)
The **tie game rule** is an exception to the time limit rule designed to reduce the number of tie games. If a 6:15 game before the 3rd Monday of May ends in a tie, play continues until the tie is resolved, except that no new inning will begin after 7:15 pm. For games on or after the 3rd Monday in May, the cutoff time to start new innings is 7:30 pm.
The league also has a **darkness rule** as follows. A regular season game will be considered official if *four* complete innings have been played (or 3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead) before the game is called off for darkness. If the game is called off sometime other than at the end of a complete inning, the final score will be the score at the end of the last complete inning, with the following exception. If the home team has scored an equal number or more runs than the visiting team in the incomplete inning then the final score is the score at the end of the incomplete inning. The ASA rule for a game called off due to rain, lightning, or other factors beyond the control of the participants specifies that *five* or more complete innings (or 4 1/2 innings if the home team is winning) must be played for the game to be official. The ASA rule specifically mentions darkness as one possible factor. Thus, our rule represents a modification of the ASA rule from five (or 4 1/2) innings to four (or 3 1/2), but only for darkness. We still require five complete innings (or 4 1/2) for games called off for reasons other than darkness to be official. (2005)
3. If a game is called off before it is official on account of darkness or weather, the umpire returns the umpire fee to the home team. Official games ending in ties are not replayed and are counted in the standings.
4. In the event of a forfeit, the forfeiting team pays the umpire for the game, even if they are the visiting team. If the forfeit was announced ahead of time and the teams do not gather at the field, the team pays a forfeiting fee of \$10 to the league. (2009) The \$10 is then paid to the umpire who had that game. (2014)
5. When an umpire takes a “lone” game, the league will pay him \$5 in addition to the usual umpire fee paid by the home team, except in cases of forfeited games when he gets \$10 (see above). (2007)
6. When a plate umpire works without the help of a base umpire, the league will pay him an additional \$10. (2018)
7. Requests to reschedule a game are decided by the “reschedule committee.” When submitting a request, managers are encouraged to supply a reason for the request and indicate whether the team would need to forfeit if the request is not granted. In general, the committee is more likely to grant requests if; (a) the request is not close in time to the game date (usually need at least one week, prefer a month or more), and (b) the reason for the request involves a church-wide function. (2012)
8. Teams may use players who meet the church attendance requirement at a church different from the sponsoring church(es) so long as the other church does not also have a team playing in the league. (2004)
9. The league president (or his representative) is responsible for calling off games in advance due to weather or field conditions. He will usually try to make such decisions at least one hour before game time. Our time-honored league convention is, **if you haven’t been notified otherwise, your game is to be played as scheduled.** Once the teams gather at a field for a game, the home plate umpire decides, based on the conditions encountered there, whether or not the game can be played. When an umpire calls off games on a field due to weather, the home team manager is responsible for notifying the managers in the other games on that field that night. If the umpire and the visiting team manager have cell phones, they are encouraged to help out.
10. The league president is responsible for rescheduling all games. In doing so, he consults a matrix that shows him all of the scheduled games and “no-play” dates for each team. Managers are encouraged to keep their lists of “no-play” dates current and updated as the season progresses.
11. Lists of rescheduled games are distributed to the league via the email list server. Each team must have a subscriber to the list. Check for emails at least every third day, preferably more often.
12. The league web site is at www.dacsl.net.

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