

DURHAM CO-ED SLO-PITCH ASSOCIATION

RULES AND REGULATIONS

All league teams and their representatives must ensure that the league Constitution, By-laws and Rules and Regulations are strictly observed. Failure to adhere to the said laws will result in disciplinary action by the league Executive (including the revoking of the offending team from the league).

Playing Field:

- Bases are 65 feet apart.
- Pitching distance is 50 feet minimum.
- Batters' box is 7 feet by 3 feet.
- Safety base will be used at first base.
- Strike Mat: A 2' by 3' to fit over the plate.
- A safe line at home plate and a commitment line shall be used.

Equipment:

- Gloves may be worn by any defensive player.
- Trappers may be worn by the pitcher, catcher and first baseman only.
- Shoes may **not** have metal cleats.
- Bats: Approved softball bats.- must have the ASA or USSSA stamp or approval on the bat
- Balls are provided by the League.
- Helmets: C.S.A. approved helmets may be worn by any player. The League encourages those who wish to wear a helmet to do so. Helmets are not provided by the League.
- One new ball is to be provided by the home team and one good second ball approved by the umpire is to be provided by the visiting team.
- Unusual hats may be worn as long as they do not pose any safety issues to any other players

Team:

Teams must have a minimum of 8 players so they can field a team. No automatic out if it does not affect the batting requirement. Teams cannot field more than six men.

- During regular league season if there are seven players, then the team can opt to pull a registered league player from the stands to be able to field a team.
- If there are six or less players then the game is defaulted (except injury rule).
- **Exception:** This rule is not in effect during playoffs.

All players must be 16 years of age during that year or older to play. Parent or Guardian must sign the registration form.

Blood Rule:

Any participant (player, coach or umpire) who is bleeding or has blood on his uniform may not participate until the bleeding is controlled and his soiled uniform changed. If the cleanup and/or uniform change can be accomplished quickly, play would be suspended until the participant is ready to play. If a player is removed from the game, he shall be replaced by a legal substitute. When the player has had the bleeding controlled and the soiled uniform replaced, he can resume his place in the game. **If the team is batting all players, and a player is removed due to blood, his place in the batting order is simply missed and there is no penalty.** This batter will return to his regular position in the line-up once the blood is cleaned up.

Courtesy Runner:

- a) All teams may use a maximum of three (3) courtesy runners per game. The courtesy runners will be male for male and female for female.
- b) The courtesy runner must be a registered player from your team.
- c) The courtesy runner must be announced to the home plate umpire before he takes his place on the base.
- d) If the courtesy runner is due up to bat, the team may use another courtesy runner (remember only 3 per game). If this is not possible, the courtesy runner up is out, but remains on base and the next batter in the lineup is due up.
- e) Rick Thompson will be allowed to have a pinch runner from the fence due to a medical condition. The runner will be the last male out. If there is no man out, then you can not use the same runner each time.

NOTE: The purpose of Section d) is to ensure that no courtesy runner may leave the base he is occupying to come to bat.

Substitution:

Any player in the batting order may be replaced during any stoppage of play with a legal registered player not already in the batting order. Each starting player may re-enter the game once in the same position in the batting order.

Starting the Game:

For regular scheduled League games, home and visitor will already be pre-determined with the season schedule.

Playoff's and Championship games will be determined by a toss of a coin.

Duration:

No inning will begin after one hour and five minutes. – Last inning must be called

Regular play is up to seven innings in the allotted time.

The game ends if the home team has scored more runs in six innings or before the third out in the last half of the seventh inning than the visiting team has scored in seven innings.

All games have the possibility of ending up in a tie except the Championship games.

In Championship games, after 7 completed innings, a tied game will continue with extra innings until one side has scored more runs at the end of a completed inning, or until the home team scores more in their half inning before the third out. This is for a maximum of 2 extra innings, at which point International Rules to break a tie will be used (the last out from the previous inning will begin the next inning on second base).

Mercy Rule:

A team losing by 12 or more runs after 4 and one half innings has the option to call mercy and end the game.

Playoff's – Mercy Rule is in effect and enforced by umpires

Forfeits:

A game shall be declared a forfeit if a team fails to field the required number of players prior to or during the game, refuses to continue the game after a suspension of play, intentionally tries to delay or hasten the game, or intentionally violates a rule of the game after being warned by the umpire. A forfeit shall be declared if a participant or spectator, ejected from the game by an umpire does not leave the park within one minute. When a participant or spectator is ejected and must leave the ball park, that participant or spectator must move far enough away so that they may not be seen or heard by the other participants of the game and may not participate with the game in any manner.

There will be a \$50.00 fine levied against a team for a default. This covers the cost of the diamond and umpire. If both teams scheduled to play at that time agree not to play the game, and diamond time and the umpire can be cancelled, the fine will be waived. The decision to default the game has to be agreed upon by both teams **BEFORE** contacting the executive. The executive **MUST HAVE AT LEAST 4 DAYS NOTICE** to allow for cancellations. Please bear in mind that if the diamonds and/or umpire cannot be cancelled, the fine will still be in place. **NOTE: All fines must be paid within 14 days of notice**

Profanity:

Any participant openly using profanity during a game shall be ejected from further participation in that game. This is at the Umpire's discretion.

We ask that in general all participants and spectators refrain from using profanity at any of the diamonds since this is a Co-ed League and we encourage families to attend. If there is a problem with profanity by spectators at a game the umpire will suspend the game until the spectator stops, or is asked to leave. If the spectator refuses to leave, the umpire has the right to declare the game a forfeit.

Jewellery:

It is strongly recommended that any type of jewellery not be worn in any SPO play. If worn, each player is solely responsible for any injury/damage that may be caused by this jewellery. The umpire may have any player removed any jewellery or equipment that he deems dangerous.

Scoring:

A run is scored when a player safely touches first, second, third and crosses the safe line at home. If a player touches the mat then they are out. A runner may not score ahead of a preceding runner who has not been retired. A run may not score if the last out of an inning is a force out or a preceding runner declared out. The score of a forfeited game shall be 7-0 in favour of the team not at fault.

Throwing from the Outfield:

No outfielder may make the force out at 1st base.

Home Run Rule:

There is a Home Run Rule for any fenced diamonds. Each team is allowed three home runs (over the fence) for each game played. Once both teams have reached the 3 homerun limit the plus 1 comes into effect. Any other ball hit over the fence will count as a strike if both teams have not reached the 3 homerun limit.

Pitching:

The pitcher must stand facing the batter with the ball held in one hand. This position must be maintained for at least one second. A pitcher may not start standing closer than 50 feet. The pitcher must maintain the same distance while pitching for each individual at bat.

The delivery starts when the pitcher makes any motion of his windup after the required pause. A step may be taken in any direction simultaneous with the release of the pitch.

The pitch shall be delivered with an underhand motion and at a moderate speed.

The arc of the pitch is not to be less than 6 feet or more than 12 feet.

“NO PITCH” is declared by the umpire if the pitcher pitches:

- during a dead ball
- before the batter and/or umpire are ready
- when a runner is out for leaving a base too soon

The ball is dead after a strike or ball is called (runners may not advance).

Batting:

Players must bat in the order listed on the score sheet.

The batting order may not have more than two men in a row. You must watch the top and bottom of your order so that you do not have more than two men in a row. If there is more than two men in a row then an automatic out will be placed in the appropriate spot in the batting order.

If a player’s turn at bat has not ended when his team’s half-inning ends, he is the first to bat in the next half-inning.

The batter must take his position within the batter’s box within 10 seconds.

A “strike” is a legally pitched ball that any part of the ball makes contact with any part of the mat, any pitched ball that is swung at and missed, or a batted ball that is ruled foul.

A “ball” is a legally pitched ball that lands outside the strike mat and is not swung at by the batter or an illegally pitched ball that is not swung at by the batter.

There is no bunting.

The “**Infield Fly**” rule is in effect. The batter is out if he hits an infield fly (called by the umpire) with less than 2 out and runners on 1st and 2nd, or 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

The 10th Batter Rule is in effect (not last inning- last inning must be called). It is up to **both teams** to notify the umpire when the 10th batter is coming up to bat. The 10th batter cannot be walked. Once the ball is in play, the fielded team must get the ball to home plate so the umpire can call time to complete the half-inning. If the 10th batter is missed, the inning ends immediately and there will be no ill gotten gains from being missed.

Legally batted balls are ruled fair (batter and runners may advance) or foul (a strike) by the umpire.

An illegally batted ball occurs when the batter steps on the mat or has his foot on the ground completely in front of the mat when the bat comes into contact with the ball. If this happens then the batter will be out.

Walks:

When a male batter receives four straight balls (no strikes thrown) or an intentional walk, he is automatically awarded second base. If there is a female following, she has the option to either walk or bat. If there is one strike thrown to the male batter with a female following, then the female must bat. All other walks that are not four straight balls or an intentional walk are awarded first base only.

Sliding:

Sliding is permitted (except at home). The League is still concerned with the safety of the players. You are not allowed to intentionally take out an opposing player. There is no spiking! It is the discretion of the umpire on whether he feels a slide was to intentionally hurt another player.

Running:

The batter may proceed around the bases:

- when he hits a fair ball
- after four balls or an intentional walk
- after interference by a catcher

When the batter runs to first, he may overrun first base and safely return to the base provided he does not try to advance to second base.

On the batter's attempt at first base on an infield hit, he must use the orange portion of the Safety Base. Once the batter has safely reached first base, he must then use the white portion. The defensive player must always use the white portion.

A runner may run the bases:

- when a fair ball is hit
- when a caught fly ball is first touched (tag up on the fly)
- when the ball is overthrown and remains in play

A runner is advanced by the umpire:

- when a fair batted ball goes out of play
- when a thrown or batted ball is contacted by a thrown glove
- if forced when the batter is awarded a base on balls (walk)
- when a live ball is carried or dropped out of play
- when the ball is overthrown and goes out of play (two bases from the last base at the time of the throw)

- when a defensive player obstructs the runner as he progresses around the base path, the umpire will award the placement he felt the runner would have made had there been no obstruction
- all awarded bases must be touched in proper order

A runner must return to the base:

- when the pitcher is ready to pitch (if he is not in contact with the base, he is declared out for a lead off – at the umpire’s discretion)
- when a foul ball is hit
- when the batter or another runner interferes with the defensive team (unless forced by the batter being awarded first base)
- when the ball is batted illegally
- when a fly ball is caught (he may advance only after the ball is first touched by a fielder)
- during a live ball, a runner may return to touch a base unless he has left the field of play or a succeeding runner has scored (he must proceed in reverse order touching all intervening bases)
- during a dead ball, a runner may return to touch a base provided he has not passed the next base

Dismissals

“A batter is out.” The **ball is dead** and no runners may advance if:

- he has three strikes
- he illegally bats the ball
- he bunts or chops downward on a pitch
- a runner interferes with a fielder in an attempt to prevent a double play
- he entered the batter’s box with an illegal or altered bat
- the batter before reaching first base, retreats towards home plate to avoid a tag

“A batter is out.” The **ball is alive** and runners may advance if:

- his fly ball (fair or foul) is legally caught
- on a fair ball not caught on the fly, the ball is held by a fielder while touching first base before the batter touches first base
- on a fair ball not caught on the fly, he is touched with the ball held by a fielder before he touches first base

“A runner is out.” The **ball is dead** if:

- on a pitched ball, he leaves the base before the ball hits the mat, hits the ground or is swung at by the batter
- he fails to return to his base following a halt in play
- while off the base, he is hit by a fair batted ball before it has passed an infielder
- he deliberately runs into a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to tag him
- he interferes with an attempt to field a ball or with a thrown ball

“A runner is out.” The **ball is alive** if:

- he runs more than 1 meter outside the established base path to avoid a tag
- on a force out, the fielder, while holding the ball, touches the base before the runner
- while off his base, he is touched with the ball held by a fielder
- he overtakes a preceding runner
- a coach or another player physically assists him

“A runner is not out” if:

- he is touched by a fielder who does not have or does not maintain control of the ball
- he runs outside the baseline to avoid interfering with a fielder making a play
- he is unintentionally hit by a batted ball while on base
- he is tagged between the commitment line and the safe line

NOTE:

- 1) **A batter or runner is out, if the fielder making a play on him uses an illegal glove.**
- 2) **There is NO tagging between the commitment line and the safe line.**

Ejections:

Any player ejected from a game and/or from the park is only ejected for that game. If there is more than one game to be played (eg. Playoffs) then the player is still only ejected from one game. The only exception would be if the player was ejected over physical violence, and then that player would be ejected for the day.

Any player or coach using physical violence (i.e. fighting, throwing a punch, etc.) will result in an indefinite suspension to be reviewed by the League Executive.

Injury Rule:

Any team that suffers an injury that removes a player from the game that results in that team being reduced to 7 eligible players and is unable to pull a player from the stands (if there is an available registered player in the stands, they can play) will not have to forfeit the game. In the event of the above occurring, the opposing team can select a player to play for them. In the event that there are no players available or a team refuses to help out, then the team suffering the injury shall be allowed to complete the game with 7 players. An automatic out must be used only if this results in more than 2 men batting in a row.

This rule is used for injuries only. If the team shows up with only 7 players and is unable to pull a player from the stands, then the game will still be defaulted.

NOTE: The player substituting for the injured player must be able to fulfill our batting order requirements.

Score Cards:

All league score cards must be signed by the Umpire. Umpires are to verify that the score is correct on the score card. The winning team is responsible for filling out the score card, having it signed by the umpire, and delivering it to Tina by the following Saturday. Failure to do so will result in the loss of your 2 points for the win. In the case of a tie, BOTH teams must hand in the card or lose the 1 point.

Game Discrepancies:

Discrepancies must be reported to the executive with 4 hours of the regular league games and within ½ hour during playoff games. Any discrepancies brought the executives attention after these time frames will result in the game outcome not being changed and no penalties will be applied.

Explanations:

Catch – A catch is not completed until the fielder securely holds the ball in his hand or glove (which is properly worn on his hand) long enough to prove he has control of the ball and any release of the ball is voluntary or intentional. If the ball has hit anything other than the fielder or another fielder, it cannot be a caught fly ball.

Commitment Line – A line in foul territory drawn perpendicular to the third base line. When a runner crosses this line by touching the ground beyond the line but does not reach the safe line, he shall be called out when the ball is legally held by a defensive player in contact with the mat. Runners who have not crossed the line or who cross the line but must tag up on a caught fly ball, may return to third base.

Fair Ball – A batted ball that is touched while on or above fair ground, stops on fair territory within the infield, contacts a base, bounces over first or third base, or first lands on fair ground beyond the infield.

Foul Ball – A batted ball that is not fair.

Inbounds – The ball or a player is in bounds until they touch the ground or an object that is outside the designated playing area.

Interference – An offensive player may not do anything to confuse, distract or hinder a fielder making a play.

Obstruction – A defensive player may not hinder or restrict a runner from progressing from base to base unless fielding a batted ball, holding the ball, or about to catch the ball.

Safe Line – A line drawn in foul territory starting at the top left-hand corner of home plate perpendicular to the third base line. A runner attempting to reach home must do so by touching the ground in foul territory on or beyond the SAFE line. Sliding into the mat is not allowed. The runner is out if he touches the mat whether or not a play is being made. A runner is not out if the mat is touched in an attempt to avoid a collision.