

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 these laws will result in disciplinary action by the DCSA Executive (including the removal of the offending team from the league).

DCSA – Rules modified for league

Any rules not showing under the modified or not showing under what is listed in the SPO rules automatically defaults to SPO or Softball Canada.

Playing Field:

- Bases are 65 feet apart.
- Home team is responsible for measuring and placing bases and mat

Equipment:

- Bats: Approved softball bats - must have the ASA or USSSA stamp or approval on the bat
- A batter shall be ejected from the game if he is discovered to be using an altered bat or a non-approved bat after entering the batter's box. The ejected player is suspended until there is a review with the DCSA Executive.
- Balls are provided by the DCSA.
- 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
- Helmets: C.S.A. approved helmets may be worn by any player. The DCSA encourages those who wish to wear a helmet to do so. Helmets are not provided by the DCSA.
- No steel cleats are allowed – player will be ejected and could be suspended

Team:

Teams must have a minimum of 8 players so they can field a team. There will be no automatic out if the batting requirement is not affected. 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.

Courtesy Runner:

Courtesy Runner is male for male or female for female

Starting the Game:

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

Playoffs and Championship games will be determined by a toss of a coin.

Duration:

If a team is waiting on players to arrive, they will only have a 10 min grace period which comes out of the allotted playing time for the game. Game can start with 8 players.

No inning will begin after one hour and five minutes. 10 batter rule in effect until the last inning which will be an open inning. Umpire will call last inning based on the time required and if the 10th batter rule is effected.

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 during the elimination games in the playoffs.

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. Mercy is not enforced for scheduled league games.

Playoffs – 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 sufficient notice is provide where the diamonds and the umpire can be cancelled and the other team notified then the fine will be waived.. The executive **MUST HAVE AT LEAST 3 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 remove 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 favor of the team not at fault.

Home Run Rule:

Each team is allowed 3 home runs (over the fence) for each game played. Once both teams have reached the home run limit, another home run is allowed for each team, effectively raising the home run limit by 1. If any team goes over the limit, that home run will not be scored and will count as an **OUT**.

10 Batter Rule

The 10th Batter Rule is in effect (last inning is an open inning - last inning must be called). It is up to **the batting team** to notify the umpire when the 10th batter is coming up to bat. The 10th batter cannot be walked. If the 10th batter is missed, the inning ends immediately and there will be no ill-gotten gains from it being missed.

Walks:

If a male batter is walked with another male batter following, he is awarded 1st base only. If a male batter receives four straight balls (no strikes thrown) or an intentional walk, he is awarded 2nd base only if a female is following him in the batting order. The female batter must take her at-bat.

Sliding:

Sliding is permitted (except at home). The DCSA 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.

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 (e.g. 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 DCSA 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.

Scores:

All scores are to be reported online immediately by the winning team– If the scores are not reported by the Wednesday following the schedule game, your team risks the chance of losing any points awarded in addition to the +/- . Either team can report the game score; we encourage this to keep the standings updated.

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.

SPO Rules – can be found at www.slopitch.org

Some wording has been removed that is found for Masters Play.

Playing Field:

- Pitching distance is 50 feet minimum.
- Batter's 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 21 feet from home plate shall be used.
- No outfielder may make a force out at first base.

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.
- Caps, if worn, must face forward.

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. The replacement uniform need not conform to the official team uniform. If the cleanup and/or uniform change can be accomplished quickly, play would be suspended until the participant is ready to play. If this cannot be done quickly, the player is removed from the game and replaced by a Replacement Player (may not be a player listed in the batting order.) who may act for the removed player for the remainder of the inning in progress and the following complete inning. When the player has had the bleeding controlled and the soiled uniform replaced, he must resume his place in the game. Should he not be able to return to the game within the time described, an official

substitution must be made. The use of a replacement player is not counted as an official substitution, meaning, the player may leave the game again and be re-entered (if a starting player) and also the player that was used as the replacement for him is still a legal substitute and may be used later in the game. If a player is removed due to blood and the team does not have a legal substitute/replacement available when needed, his place in the batting order is simply missed and there is no penalty.

Courtesy Runner:

- A. A team may use a maximum of three (3) courtesy runners per game.
The courtesy runner must be a legal rostered player.
- B. The courtesy runner must be announced to the home plate umpire before he takes his place on the base.
- C. If the courtesy runner is due up to bat, the team may:
 - I. use another courtesy runner and have the original courtesy runner come to bat;
OR
 - II. use a substitute or utilize the re-entry rule (if applicable) to go up to bat leaving the original courtesy runner on base; OR
 - III. If I) or II) is not implemented, the batter is ruled out but remains on base as the courtesy runner and the next batter in the lineup comes 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.

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 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. Substitutes must bat in the position in the batting order of the person they replace. A strike is a legally pitched ball that makes contact with the mat, any pitched ball swung at and missed by the batter, or a batted ball that is ruled foul. A ball is a legally pitched ball that lands outside the strike mat and not swung at by the batter or an illegally pitched ball that the batter does not swing at.

A batted ball may be classified as one of the following:

- Fly ball - a batted ball that has not yet touched the ground or any object other than a fielder;
- Line drive - a fly ball that is batted sharply and directly into the playing field;
- Bunt - a tapped ball not swung at but met with the bat;
- Chopped ball - a batted ball intentionally directed downward so that the ball bounces high into the air;
- Ground ball - a batted ball that touches the ground, an umpire (in fair territory), or a runner (after a fielder has had a chance to make a play on it);
- Infield fly - a fair fly ball that can be caught by an infielder with a normal effort.

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 or behind the mat when the bat contacts the ball.

A batter shall be ejected from the game if he is discovered to be using an altered bat or a non-approved bat after entering the batter's box

NOTE: An altered bat is one that has had its physical structure changed, including, but not limited to:

1. The bat has had the surface of the barrel or the taper changed in any way such as by sandpapering or applying a solvent to the surface such as fingernail polish remover or by any other means;
2. The bat has had the plug or the knob removed/replaced or changed in any way;
3. The bat has had anything removed or added or inserted to the inside or outside of the bat other than tape at the handle or knob;
4. The bat has been repainted.

Other examples of an altered bat would be changing or replacing manufacturers' markings or replacing the handle of the metal bat with a wooden handle.

Cracked, worn, or damaged bats are not altered bats, but will be removed from play. Such cracked, worn, or damaged bats will not result in a player suspension unless the player returned the offending bat into play after it has been removed.

Running:

The batter may proceed around the bases:

- When he hits a fair ball;
- After four balls or an intentional walk
- After interference by the 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 first attempt at first base on and play is made a first, he must use the orange portion of the Double Base. Once the batter has safely reached first base, he must now use the white portion. The defensive player always uses the white portion.

A runner may run the bases:

- When a fair ball is caught;
- When a caught fly ball is first touched;
- When the ball is overthrown and remains in play.

A runner is advanced:

- When a fair batted ball goes out of play (2 bases awarded from the time of the pitch);
- When a thrown (2 bases) or batted ball (3 bases) is contacted by a thrown glove (awarded from the time of the pitch);
- If forced when the batter is awarded a base on balls;
- When a live ball is carried or dropped out of play (1 base awarded from the time the ball became dead);
- When the ball is overthrown and goes out of play (two bases awarded from 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 are from the last base legally touched and must be touched in the 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 leadoff);
- 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 when 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.

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 fielder deliberately drops a fly ball with at least a runner on first base and less than two out;
- He enters the batter's box with an illegal or altered bat;
- The batter before reaching first base, retreats towards home plate to avoid a tag;
- The batter hits an over the fence home run in excess of the team limit

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;
- He hits an infield fly with less than two out and runners on first and second or first, second and third.

A runner is out, and the ball is dead if:

- On a pitched ball, he leaves the base before the ball has reached the plate, 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 and no other fielder is in a position to make a play;
- 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, and 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 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 fielding a ball;
- He is unintentionally hit by a batted ball while on a base;
- He is unintentionally hit by a batted ball while off a base, if no fielder has a chance to field the ball.

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 fairground 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 that is 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.