

2020 CITY OF OSAGE BEACH
ADULT SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL LEAGUE
PLAYING RULES

NOTE: The following condensed slow pitch playing rules are taken in part from the *USA/ASA Official Slow Pitch Rule Book and National By-Laws*.

THE PLAYING FIELD

- Playing field shall be established using 70 foot baselines
- Pitcher's distance shall be 50 feet
- Batter's Boxes shall be provided on either side of home plate, 6 inches from home plate and parallel to the sideline and shall be 3'W x 7' L

EQUIPMENT

- BATS – It is the responsibility of the coach, manager, and/or player(s) to know what bats are approved by ASA/USA Softball.
 - COED – Men will hit with wooden bats ONLY. Women will hit with aluminum bats that are considered legal by any/all associations (USA Softball, USSSA, NSA, etc.)
 - MENS/CHURCH - All will hit with aluminum bats that are considered legal by any/all associations (USA Softball, USSSA, NSA, etc.)
- BALLS – The City of Osage Beach City Park will provide official game balls for Co-ed League. Men's League will provide their own team balls.
 - Must be ASA/USA approved.
 - Co-ed League
 - For men, must be 12" with an optic yellow cover, shall have a COR of .52 and shall have a compression 300 pounds.
 - For women, must be 11" with an optic yellow cover, shall have a COR of .44 and shall have a compression of 400 pounds or less.
 - Men's League
 - Men's teams must purchase a 12" ball with an optic yellow cover, and shall have a COR of .52 and shall have a compression of 300 pounds or less.
- SPIKES – All players must wear shoes, but **NO** metal spikes. The soles may have soft or hard rubber/plastic cleats.
- EQUIPMENT – Not allowed to remain on the playing field during the playing of the game, either in fair or foul territory, with the exception of an official warm-up bat or official warm-up device which may be kept in proximity to the team at bat dugout.
- PROTECTIVE GEAR – Players are encouraged to utilize any protective gear/equipment they deem appropriate. Such protective gear will be allowed in sanctioned play, unless by rule or by manager/umpire ruling that such protective gear is disallowed as unsafe or as providing an unfair, competitive advantage. PITCHERS are strongly encouraged to wear face/head protection while in the field of play.

DEFINITIONS

- Refer to the *latest edition of ASA/USA Official Rules of Softball Participation Manual* for complete definitions.
-

THE GAME

- HOME TEAM: The home team will be designated on the schedule and will normally occupy the third base dugout. In double-headers and tournament play, a team occupying either dugout will not be required to move to the other for a game that follows immediately on the same field.
- STARTING TIME/GAME CLOCK: At the time described in the league schedule or five minutes after the previous game ends, whichever comes later. If a team arrives late, the game clock will start 10 minutes after scheduled start time, or 15 minutes after the previous game ends.
 - CO-ED/CHURCH TIME LIMIT = 55 MINUTES; MEN'S TIME LIMIT = 60 MINUTES
 - If a team does not have enough players or sufficient numbers (Co-Ed) when the umpire instructs them to begin play, a forfeit will result.
 - If time expires before the last out of an inning, that inning will be completed unless the home team is at bat and ahead in the score.
 - If less than a regulation game of 5 complete or 4 ½ innings, we revert back to the inning of suspension.
 - If the game is a regulation game when play is suspended, it shall be declared complete and if the home team is at bat and has taken the lead, that inning shall be considered complete.
- REGULATION GAMES: Consist of seven (7) innings, or designated time limit is reached, whichever comes first.
 - A game that is tied at the end of the seven innings shall be continued, by playing additional innings until one team has scored more runs than the other at the end of a completed inning or the home team scores more runs in their half of the uncompleted extra inning.
 - The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of rain, darkness, panic, or for any other cause which puts the umpire, player, or the patrons in peril.
- TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP: The post season championship game(s) will play a full 7 innings, however the RUN RULE still applies. Time limit does not apply for this game(s).
 - IF-Game: If the if game is played a coin flip will determine the home team for this game.
- RUN RULE: The run rules which award a win to a team that is ahead in a game are as follows for all adult leagues: 20 after 3; 15 after 4; 10 after 5.
- HOME RUN RULE: Men's: 6 & (one up) – Co-ed/Church 4 & (one up). For anything beyond the limit the ball is dead, the batter is out and no runners may advance.
- PITCHING: The minimum arc for a legal pitch in slow pitch is 6 feet from the ground to the top of the ball. The maximum arc is 10 feet. Umpires shall immediately call an illegal pitch if the ball is pitched below the minimum height or above the maximum. The batter may elect to hit the pitch, otherwise it will be an automatic called ball. The pitch shall be delivered on the throwing arm side of the body, not behind the back or between the legs. The pitcher may not attempt a quick return of the ball before the batter has taken a position in the batter's box or when the batter is off balance.
- BATTING: All batters come to the plate with a one ball, one strike count. There shall be one "courtesy foul" ball allowed in Co-ed and Church. There will be **NO** courtesy foul in Men's.
 - HITTING UP THE MIDDLE:
 - If the pitcher is hit without any time to defend him/herself, the ball is dead and the batter is automatically out. If the pitcher has time to react or make a play on the ball the play is live.
 - If the umpire suspects that a batter may be hitting purposely at a pitcher the batter will at minimum receive a warning. If the batter fails to comply at his/her next at bat they will be called out and immediately ejected from the game. An umpire is not required to warn a batter if ill content is suspected immediately.

- **STRIKE ZONE:** The City will provide a black mat that fits behind home plate. **In all divisions** a legally delivered pitch is one with proper arc that hits any part of the mat. **THE PLATE IS NOT CONSIDERED A STRIKE.**
- **WINNER** - shall be the team that scores the most runs in a game.
- Forfeited Game shall be declared by the umpire in favor of the team not at fault for any of the following: If a team fails to appear on the field, if a team refuses to play after the game has begun, if a team delays or hastens the play intentionally, if an ejected player does not leave the field immediately when ordered to do so, if for any reason a team does not have the designated number of players to begin or continue the game, or if a team willfully violates the rules of the game.

THE PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

- **AGE:** Players must be at least 16 years of age. Players under 18 must have a waiver signed by a parent or legal guardian. All players must produce a valid photo ID if requested by the City Parks and Recreation Manager.
- A team may start or continue a game with a minimum of eight (8) players. After having started play, if a team falls below the minimum number of players for any reason, the umpire shall declare a forfeit. A team starting or playing short-handed may add rostered players to the bottom of the lineup as they arrive. A team can play with 5 men and 3 women or 5 women and 3 men but will have to take an out in the spot where the 4th player is missing. **NO OUT** will be taken for any vacant position unless the vacancy is due to an ejection.
- A full team on the field consists of 10 players. In Co-ed it must be 5 men and 5 women. If a team has to play shorthanded a team can play with 4 women and 4 men, 5 and 4 in any gender mix or 6 women and 4 men, without taking an out. A team can play with 5 men and 3 women or 5 women and 3 men but will have to take an out in the spot where the 4th player is missing. All outfielders (up to 4 with a full defensive roster) must remain on the grass until the ball is hit, or the ball will be dead when hit and the batter and all runners will be awarded one base.
- Whether a substitute is announced or not, when he assumes one of the above replacements of a player, any play made by or on this play shall be legal. **NO** penalty applied for unannounced substitution of players.
- Each pitcher whose name is entered on the original lineup and batting order, or who is announced as a substitute pitcher, or who takes a position on the Pitcher's Plate and delivers **ONE** practice pitch, must then pitch to the first batter facing him until the batter has completed that turn at bat, or the side has been retired.
- Any other player may be substituted for or removed from the game whenever the ball is dead.
- **ROSTERS:** Roster with players' names must be turned into the City prior to the teams' first game. The number of roster players is unlimited. To participate in a league tournament or playoff game a player must have played (batted at least once or played defense during one out) in the following number of games: **MEN'S = 5 GAMES; CO-ED – 2 GAMES.**
- Teams may use players from other teams for the regular season and if the player is on the roster in an alternate division. Co-ed = 1 male and 2 females permitted from another team(s). Men's = 2 males from another team. Substitutes from another team in the same division are **not permitted** to sub in post season play.
- Player/substitute, manager, coach, umpire, or other team participant who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until the bleeding is stopped and the wound is covered.
- Re-entry is permitted once by any of the starting players provided such player occupies the same batting position whenever he is in the lineup and such re-entry is reported to the scorekeeper and umpire. A substitute who is withdrawn may not re-enter.
- All players, coaches, managers, and umpires of the game are to conduct themselves in a sportsmanship like manner at all times. The City Park is a family oriented facility, and appropriate conduct is a condition of admission. Umpires need not give warning prior to an ejection. In addition to USSSA rules, the following may warrant any team member's ejection:

- 1) Flagrant violations such as fighting or other unsportsmanlike conduct
- 2) Obscene or threatening demonstration toward an employee, official, opponent or spectator
- 3) Throwing, kicking or violent slamming of a bat, glove, or other item in anger
- 4) Appearing to be under the influence of any substance that puts anyone at risk
- 5) Any other action clearly hostile or uncooperative with the facility's family atmosphere

Any team member ejected from a game will be barred from participating in the teams' next game. Two team members ejected from the same game will result in a forfeit. Any team member ejected twice in the same season will be barred from all games at the City Park for 30 days or more, at the discretion of City Management.

NOTE: Captains, coaches, and players are asked to take reasonable measures to control their fans. Although umpires have no authority over persons not involved in play, they are expected to direct City Managements' attention to unruly or hostile spectators, who may be ejected from the facility.

PITCHING

- No tape, glove or any other substance is allowed upon the pitching hand or fingers; nor shall any foreign substance be applied to the ball.
- One (1) minute may be used to deliver not more than three (3) practice pitches to the catcher or other team players at the beginning of an inning or when a pitcher relieves another pitcher.
- **CATCHER:** Shall be in and remain in the lines of the catcher's box when the pitcher is in position and shall remain until the pitched ball has reached or passed the home plate, or is batted.

BATTING

- Batting order shall be listed and delivered to the assigned/official scorekeeper prior to the starting time of the game. Once submitted, lineups shall be made available to both teams for their inspection and knowledge. Lineups are considered official once the umpire puts the ball in play to begin the game.
- Batting order must be followed throughout the game, unless a substitute replaces a player. When this occurs the substitute must take the turn in the regular order at bat of the player he replaces.
- Incorrect batting order is an appeal play by the defense:
 - If a mistake is discovered before the batter up completes his turn at bat, the correct batter takes his proper place and bats assuming all accumulating balls and strikes. If the mistake is made and discovered after the incorrect batter has completed his turn at bat but before a pitch has been made to a succeeding batter, the batter who should have batted is call out. If the mistake is not discovered until a pitch is made to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is then legal and all bases advance and runs scored are counted. The next following batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter who just finished the time at bat (players missing their turn have lost their turn to bat that round).

BASE RUNNING

- A base runner while advancing or returning must touch each base in legal order: first, second, third, and home base.
- A base runner shall not score a run ahead of a base runner preceding him in the team's batting order if the preceding runner has not been put out.

- **BASE ON BALLS – CO-ED ONLY:** A walk to a male batter results in a two-base award. To help speed up the game the batter may go directly to 2nd base. **With two outs**, the following (female) batter may choose to hit or receive a base on balls, which would award her first base.
- A pitcher may tell the umpire to intentionally walk a batter, in which case the Co-ed rule applies for awarded bases depending on gender. In Men's/Church league, a walk is awarded one base.
- **STEALING:** Stealing bases is **NOT** allowed, nor advancing on a wild pitch or passed ball in any league or tournament play.
- **COURTESY RUNNERS:** Men's/Church = One runner per inning; Co-ed = One runner each inning of each gender. If an injured player will need a courtesy runner to prevent further injury after the courtesy runner limit has been used, this will be allowed. The umpire will use their judgement to invoke this rule. **The courtesy runner will be the last out for each gender.**
- **Touching bases/ "walk off home runs":** To speed play on any home run or four-base award, the batter and all runners are credited with a score and may return directly to their dugout. **There can be no appeal for failure either to touch bases or to touch them in order in this scenario.**
- **COLLISIONS:** Whenever the catcher or any fielder clearly has the ball and is waiting to tag the runner, the runner must slide or attempt to avoid contact inside the base path, or give himself up for an out. If, in the umpire's judgement, the runner deliberately and forcefully runs into the defensive player, the runner is declared out and shall be ejected from the game. The ball is declared dead and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

NOTE: The catcher or any other fielder may not block the pathway of the runner unless he has possession of the ball or is in the act of fielding a batted ball or taking a proper position to receive a thrown ball (thrown ball must already be in flight).

UMPIRES

- He/She shall have the responsibility for the proper conduct of the game.
- He/She shall take his/her initial position behind the catcher's position.
- He/She shall call plays, batted balls fair or foul, illegally batted balls and legal or illegally caught/pitched balls, as well as make other base, obstruction, interference, and tagging decisions, etc. as needed.
- **CASUAL PROFANITY / UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:** The rule gives umpires an option between simple warnings and ejection for certain actions that are out of place in a recreational, family oriented setting.
- He/She is not responsible for illegal player determination. A captain wishing to protest an illegal player or substitute should notify the plate umpire, who will then take note and turn in to City Management for review. In tournament play, the umpire and City Management should be notified immediately.
- **PROTESTS:** A coach or captain who desires to protest a game must inform the plate umpire prior to the game's final out. When the final out is completed the game is official. At the time of the protest he/she must then file a written protest along with a \$50.00 protest fee. The protest fee will be returned if the protest is upheld. The protest may involve use of illegal players. All other judgement calls are final and may not be protested.

AWARDS

- **REGULAR SEASON WINNER:** The regular season winner in each league or division will win a \$25.00 City Park Gift Certificate.
- **TOURNAMENT PLAYOFFS:** 1st, 2nd, 3rd place shall all receive prizes. Amounts may vary depending on teams.