

Fair Lakes Adult Softball League

Administrative Rules

1. Game start time will be 6:15 sharp. A ten minute grace period for each game is allowed if a team cannot field a legal team. This grace period will not be counted in the 65 minute game time. A game will consist of a maximum of seven (7) innings or approximately 65 minutes. Games can go past the 65 minute time limit if both competing coaches and the umpire agree.
2. All teams that bring refreshments to the field are responsible for removing the trash. Beverages will not be permitted to be consumed on the field of play.
3. The teams must exchange lineups before a game may begin. Any delays will be taken out of the 65 minute game time. Communication of the score by the scorekeepers between innings will help to avoid misunderstandings.
4. Games may be canceled or postponed only by the League office or the umpire on duty that night. The League office can only cancel games up until 4:00 p.m. After 4:00 p.m. the umpire on duty is responsible for canceling the games. His/her decision will be based upon field and weather conditions. Make-up games will be announced as soon as possible by the League office. (See rule # 17).
5. Umpires will call all games based on the published rules of the Fair Lakes Softball League. Any situation that arises that is not explicitly covered by these rules shall be called by the umpire using his or her best judgment. If a judgment call is made, no arguments with the umpire are allowed. No protests of judgment calls will be accepted. The published rules may be updated then re-published based on these judgment calls, if deemed appropriate.
6. Teams should conduct themselves in a reasonable manner - remember some people bring children to the games! If in the judgment of the umpire this conduct is not appropriate, **warnings** will be given to the team coaches. If the conduct continues, coaches and the people involved will be ejected from the game and must leave the playing area. Any team that has a player(s) or spectator(s) ejected from a game is responsible for those persons leaving.
7. Any person(s) ejected from a game must leave the playing area immediately. Failure to do so will result in penalties to their team. Any person ejected from a game is also suspended from the next game that their team plays. The League office will decide team penalties.
8. Protests of a game situation will be considered on the following items only:
 - A. Failure to comply with the rules.
 - B. Umpire misinterpretation of a playing rule.
 - C. Umpire failure to apply the correct rule to a given situation.
 - D. Umpire failure to apply the correct penalty for a given situation.

NOTE: The umpire's actions during the game must reflect their professional responsibility and ability. The umpire's demeanor during the game is not justifiable grounds for a formal protest; however, it is justifiable grounds for a written complaint to the League office.

Protests must be made by the team manager/coach to the umpire after play has stopped and before the next legal pitch is delivered. The umpire shall note in both scorebooks the point of play at which the protest is lodged and must sign both scorebooks attesting to this protest, at the time of the protest. Protesting managers shall submit their protest in writing along with a \$30 protest fee within three (3) days of the date of the protested game. Verbal protests will not be accepted. The League office shall resolve the protest and let the protesting manager know the outcome within two (2) weeks of receiving the written protest and protest fee. If the protest is upheld,

the protest fee will be returned to the team along with a decision on how the game involved will be affected. If the protest is disallowed, the protest fee will be deposited into the League operating fund.

9. Fair Lakes Softball League will provide the softballs for each game. Team participation fees include the purchase price of the ball. Twelve (12) and eleven (11) inch ASA COR 44 balls will be used. A sufficient amount of balls will be provided. Balls will be replaced during the season if necessary. However, if excessive replacement is needed, teams will split the cost.
10. The Semi-Finals and Finals of the playoffs will be a full seven (7) inning game with no time limit.
11. During the playoffs, and only during the playoffs, no player will be allowed to play on more than **ONE** team. This will eliminate the usage of “ringers” during the most crucial games of the year. Managers from each team will be responsible for monitoring this rule.
12. Playoff participants must be a regular team member of the team that they will represent in the playoffs and must have played in a minimum of 30% of that team’s regular season games. As a reminder, all players must have a waiver on file with the Fair Lakes League office in order to be permitted to play both in regular season and the playoffs.
13. All teams must turn in a form listing two (2) contacts with a phone number, fax number and e-mail address. No team will be allowed to compete without providing this information.
14. **The Fair Lakes Softball League “Rainout” phone number is (703) 449-4302.** It should be used by coaches who have reason to believe that their game may be rained out. A voice message will be left if that day's games are canceled. This message is updated by the Fair Lakes League.

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Field Ground Rules

1. The field of play:
 - A. Fair Territory is the area between the lines that run from home plate to the foul poles in the outfield. Any ball hit within this area, in the judgment of the umpire, is considered a fair ball. Bases and the foul poles are considered in fair territory.
 - B. Foul Territory is the area outside of the foul lines defined above.
 - C. In Play Territory is the area containing fair and foul territory
 - D. Out of Play Territory is the area behind the backstop and outside the first and third base foul lines that is delineated from the playing surface by the hillside.
 1. If a Fair Ball is hit into this area it is considered a dead ball and the umpire halts progress of all base runners at the point the ball enters the out of play area; then the umpire, using his judgment, advances all base runners one base from the last base touched.
 2. If a thrown ball enters this area it is considered a dead ball and the umpire halts progress of all base runners at the point the ball enters the out of play area; then the umpire, using his judgment, advances all base runners one base from the last base touched.
2. If a fair ball is hit into the grassy area beyond the foul poles in the outfield, it will be considered a dead ball. The umpire halts progress of all base runners, then using his best judgment advances all base runners one base from the last base touched.
3. If a fair ball bounces over the fence in the outfield (home run fence), it will be considered a ground rule double, allowing the batter to automatically advance to second base.
4. The bench areas are considered Out of Play. Any ball intentionally touched by a non-fielding player or spectator becomes a dead ball. Any ball that becomes trapped by equipment will be considered a dead ball. The umpire then halts advancement of all base runners. Using his judgment, the umpire then advances all base runners one base from the last base touched.
5. Pitcher's must pitch from the pitching rubber. This will be marked by the Umpire. It may not be moved by any player, coach, or spectator. The distance will be marked at fifty (50) feet.
6. If a ball goes Out of Play on a throw to first base, the batter will be advanced to second base regardless of where they were while running. All base runners trying to advance will be awarded one base from the last base touched. All base runners not trying to advance will be advanced only if forced by another base runner.
7. There will be a line 135 feet from home plate that outfielders must stand behind when a female comes to bat. Outfielders must stay behind the line until the ball is hit.

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Rules of Play

1. A legal team lineup consists of a minimum of eight (8) players and a maximum of twelve (12) players. Any combination of males and females that satisfies these requirements will be allowed:
 - A. A maximum of seven (7) males and a minimum of three (3) females make up the ten (10) fielding positions. This constitutes a normal lineup.
 - B. Two (2) Extra Hitters may be included in the lineup if the team is using a normal lineup. An extra hitter is defined as a player not currently playing a fielding position. At least one of the extra hitters must be female.

Any deviations from the normal lineup mean a team cannot use the extra hitter option for that game. If after starting the game with twelve (12) batters, a team cannot continue to bat at twelve (12) players due to injury or a player leaving, then an out will take place every time that batting position comes up.
 - C. If a team cannot field the minimum of three (3) females the following penalties will be enforced:
 1. The spot in the lineup where the female would bat will be considered an out every time that position would bat.
 2. The team will play shorthanded in the field.
 3. A male may not be substituted for the female.
 4. No extra hitters may be used.
 - D. Designated Hitters are not allowed.
 - E. Female batters must be evenly spaced throughout the lineup. Coaches should consider how a lineup wraps around when determining whether the female batters are evenly spaced.
 - F. There is no penalty enforced if a team plays less than seven (7) men.
2. Balls and strikes will be called by the umpire based on usage of a carpet. If a pitched ball strikes the carpet it is a strike, if a pitched ball does not strike the carpet, it is a ball.
3. When each batter comes to the plate to bat, the count will automatically be one (1) ball and one (1) strike. The batter will receive one (1) courtesy foul after the second strike, the next foul ball hit after the courtesy foul will be considered a strike out.
4. A legal pitch must rise a minimum of six (6) feet above the ground and not exceed a maximum of twelve (12) feet above the ground.
5. Poaching - No player may take a play away from another player, male or female. A player assigned a position must attempt to field all balls hit or thrown at that position. Any other player may back up that position, but cannot take the play away from the position player.
 - A. If poaching is called on a batted ball the manager of the offended team has three options:
 1. The batter is awarded first base. Other base runners may not advance unless forced.
 2. The batter may bat again assuming the ball and strike count that existed prior to the pitch that was hit.
 3. The result of the play stands.
 - B. If poaching is called on a thrown ball, the umpire shall award the batter-base runner and each other base runners affected by the poach, the base(s) they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, had there been no poach.

6. **Bats – The use of multi-walled bats is strictly prohibited. Bats must meet ASA certification.**
7. Infield Fly Rule - This rule comes into effect whenever the bases are loaded or there are runners on first and second base. There must be less than two (2) outs. If in this situation the batter hits a fair ball that is not a line drive which can be caught in flight within the infield dirt area with ordinary ease by an infielder, the batter will be called out. Other base runners may advance at their own risk.
8. If a male batter is walked and the next batter is a female, the female batter has the option of taking an intentional walk or batting. The female must notify the umpire before entering the batters' box if the walk option is to be chosen. As soon as the female batter steps into the batters box to attempt to bat, she cannot take the intentional walk option.
9. Female players have the option of attempting to bat with an eleven (11) inch softball.
10. If a batter is to be intentionally walked, the pitcher can notify the umpire and no more pitches need to be thrown to the batter. This may take place at any point in the ball and strike count.
11. One courtesy runner each half inning may be used. Any player on the approved roster may be used as a courtesy runner. A courtesy runner is in the game when they touch the base. A courtesy runner whose turn at bat comes while on base will be out. The courtesy runner will be removed from the base and come to bat. A second courtesy runner cannot be substituted at this time. A player may be a courtesy runner only once per inning. A male courtesy runner may be used for a male base runner, and a female courtesy runner may be used for either a male or female base runner. If a runner violates any of the above situations, they will be called out and removed from the base.
12. Metal cleats may not be worn at any time on the field. Any player found wearing them will be required to change into regular cleats or tennis shoes. If the player is unable to make a change, they will be not be allowed to continue playing in the game.
13. If a game is called because of the time limit and the inning has not been completed it shall be decided as follows:
 - A. The home team fails to bat - the score reverts to the last completed inning.
 - B. The home team is still batting but fails to at least equal the score - the score reverts to the score of the last completed inning.
 - C. The home team is batting and equals the score when the game is called - the final score is recorded as a tie.
14. A game will be considered official if at the point that play is suspended due to weather, field conditions, or injuries, at least four (4) innings have been completed (3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead or tied).
15. Bunting is not allowed. A bunt is defined as a batted ball that is not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly. Any player bunting the ball will be automatically called out.
16. Players should use sportsman-like conduct during the course of the game. If in the umpire's judgment conduct is not appropriate coaches will be warned. If the conduct continues an umpire may eject the offending person(s). If in the judgment of the umpire conduct is of a "serious nature", the player(s) involved can be ejected from the game. No warnings need be given to the players or coaches.
17. While pitching the ball the pitcher must be in contact with the pitching rubber at the point that the ball is released from the pitcher's hand.
18. If a fair batted ball hits a base runner then the base runner is considered out. The ball is considered a dead ball and any other base runners may not advance.

19. If a fair batted ball comes into contact with the batter as he/she attempts to run to first base, the batter will be automatically called out, and the ball will be considered a dead ball. Any other base runners may not advance.
20. A slaughter rule will be used. If a team is behind by 20 runs or more after four (4) innings, 3 1/2 if the home team is ahead, the game will be stopped. The final score reported to the League office will be the score at the time the game was stopped.
21. If after the first pitch to start any half inning, the team in the field is found to be fielding an illegal team, refer to the legal team definition in the above rules, the following restitution will apply:

All runs that have been scored in the inning will stand.

The batting team continues play at the current point in the lineup.

All current base runners stay in their place.

The current number of outs and the current ball and strike count are reset.

