Intramural Sports | Softball Rules

The rules and policies listed below apply to all leagues and levels of play for Intramural Softball including, but not limited to: Pro League, Rookie League, and CoRec League.

**COVID-19 Implications**

Intramural Sports and other events have been intentionally selected based on current COVID-19 guidelines and participant safety. Please note, due to COVID-19 policies and procedures, all Intramural Sport rules will adhere to all necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), social distancing, and sanitation methods including, but not limited to, face coverings worn by participants and staff, facility check-in, and temperature checks.

**Facility**

Games will be played on the Intramural Fields located at the address listed below:

485 Century Circle  
Conway, SC 29526

All participants must park at the parking lot nearest the Coastal Science Center

**Eligibility**

Please reference the Intramural Sports Participant Handbook for player eligibility guidelines. The Recreational Sports staff assumes responsibility for the investigation of eligibility for all participants upon request. Valid CINO ID will be required during all intramural activities. Any individual the Recreational Sports staff deems to be ineligible will not be allowed to participate.

**Students**

All graduate and undergraduate students enrolled in academic courses are eligible to participate in Intramural Sport activities.

**Faculty/Staff**

All full-time and part-time faculty and staff members are eligible to participate in Intramural Sport activities.

**Varsity Student Athletes, Coaches & Staff**

Any person whose name appears on a collegiate varsity, junior varsity, or freshman roster as a player or a coach will be ineligible in that specific intramural sport after August 1st in the year they have quit the team, or their eligibility has expired. This includes all players who are “red shirted” in any sport, anyone who practices with a team regularly, but does not participate in intercollegiate competition, and coaches, staff, or other individuals listed on the team roster.

Former collegiate varsity athletes may participate in their related sport once eligible; however, they must participate in the Pro League (if offered, regardless of how long they have been removed from a varsity roster) and a limit of one (1) player is allowed per team roster in all sports.
**Club Sport Members**
Club Sport members are defined as individuals who meet one of the following criteria:
- Name appears a club sport team roster during the academic year;
- Signed a consent form and is actively participating in club functions; or
- Actively participating with the club during their season.

Current club sport members may participate in their related sport either in Pro or Rookie leagues, but must adhere to the following restrictions:
- 2-4 player teams = 2 club members
- 5-8 player teams = 3 club members
- 9+ player teams = 4 club members

**Game Time & Timing Regulations**
A game consists of seven (7) innings and may be shortened by Recreational Sports staff for weather-related conditions.

All games shall have a 55-minute time limit where no inning will begin after the 50-minute mark has passed.

The Recreational Sport staff will announce when the game is entering the final inning.

Games that are suspended due to inclement weather will be official if four (4) innings (3.5 innings if home team is winning at the time of cancellation) have been completed.

**Overtime Rules**
Overtime will only be played in the playoffs. During the playoffs, if the game is tied at the end of the final inning, 7th or due to the 55-minute time limit, extra innings will be played, and all subsequent innings will implement the international tie breaker rule:
- Each inning will begin with a runner on second base. The player who was the last out in the previous inning will be the runner at second base.
- Each team will have an opportunity to bat. Play will continue until a winner is determined.

**Mercy Rule**
The game will be final if one team leads by twenty (20) runs after three (3) innings, fifteen (15) runs after four (4) innings, and ten (10) runs after five (5) innings.

**Player Equipment**
Head decorations, head wear, and jewelry are all illegal player equipment. Only headbands less than two inches wide, made of non-abrasive, unadorned, single-colored cloth, elastic, fiber, soft leather, pliable plastic, or rubber will be permitted during the game. No bandannas (“do rags”) or hard-billed caps are allowed.

**All jewelry of any type must be removed**
You must schedule an appointment with Intramural Sport Graduate Assistant prior to playing if you have a special equipment need (i.e. medical). All equipment decisions made on-site by the Recreational Sport staff on duty shall be final.

The Intramural Sport program will provide balls to be used.

Teams should bring their own bats that are ASA or USSSA approved. Bats cannot have a difference greater than seven (7) for men and twelve (12) for women between length and ounce, and must be single wall only. The umpires prior to the game will inspect all bats.

- Recreational Sports reserves the right to ban any bat or change the bat requirement at any point in the season/playoffs for safety, equipment, or any other concerns
- A player who uses an illegal bat is subject to an immediate ejection and suspension from Intramural Sports.

Teams are required to bring their own gloves, all field players, including the pitcher and the catcher must wear a glove.

All players must wear appropriate, athletic shoes or cleats, metal cleats are not allowed.

**The Game**

A team may start with eight (8) players, but have no more than ten (10) players on the field and in the batting lineup. A team may have an unlimited number of substitutions on the team bench.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minutes Late</th>
<th>Penalty</th>
<th>Sportsmanship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 4:59 minutes</td>
<td>Starting score 1-0</td>
<td>Max 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ minutes</td>
<td>Forfeit</td>
<td>Max 2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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If at game time a team is not ready for play, a grace period of up to five (5) minutes will be automatically enacted (ready to play means dressed, on the field & signed in). The game clock will run through the grace period.

A team must submit a lineup prior to the start of each game. The lineup is the series of players in the order that they will bat. A lineup may be 8-10 players. If a team uses a lineup of fewer than ten (10) players, there will be one combined out for the missing players in the lineup.

**Example:** A team with an eight (8) person lineup will take one (1) out between the 8th and 1st batters.

Valid CINO ID cards are required for participation.

**Substitutions**

Substitutions are used to replace one player by another in the batting lineup. Any player on the roster may play any position in the field without using a substitution.

Substitutions are unlimited, but can only occur at a dead ball with the permission of the umpire.
Start of Play
During the captain’s meeting, captains will play *rock, paper, scissors* or use a coin toss to determine which team will start on offense or defense.

Scoring
Teams will score one (1) run for each player that crosses home plate safely.

Field Dimensions
A ball is considered fair when it is hit and lands between or on the foul lines, crosses 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base inside of the foul line or goes over the homerun fence between the foul lines.

A ball is considered foul when it is hit and lands outside the foul lines, crosses 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base outside of the foul line, or goes over the homerun fence outside the foul lines.

Batting
A batter will begin with a 1-1 (one ball, one strike) count. If a batter fouls the ball with two (2) strikes, they will be called out.

Bunting or a “slap hit” is not permitted. A batter must make a legitimate attempt at the ball with a full swing. If the Recreational Sports staff rule that a bunt or a slap hit was attempted, the batter will be considered out.

Batters will be walked following ball four.
The batting team is responsible for retrieving any ball hit out of the playing area, over the fence, foul territory, etc. Any ball hit over the second line (“fence”) and pylons in the air shall be a homerun, and any ball that rolls past the second line (on the ground) shall be dead and considered a ground rule triple.

The batter may not do the following:
- Have a foot entirely outside the limits of the batter’s box or be touching home plate when the ball is hit
  - Penalty for this is a dead ball, the batter is out, and all runners must return to their original base.
- Step into the batter’s box with an illegal or altered bat.
  - Penalty for this is a dead ball, the batter is out, and if it is a second offense, the player is ejected from the game. All runners must return to their original base.

**Homerun Rule**
Each team is allowed two (2) homeruns per inning. After the second homerun, any ball hit over the fence will result in an out for the inning in question.

**Base Running**
Stealing and leading off the base is not allowed and will result in the runner being called out.

A courtesy runner may be used for any player injured or not able to run the bases safely.
- Must be the player who made the last out;
- Only allowed during a dead ball and the umpire must be notified

A player is not required to slide into a base; however, a player may not deliberately crash into a fielder who is attempting to make a tag. If a runner violates this rule they are subject to immediate ejection. Additionally, feet-first sliding is not allowed; any participant that slides feet-first is subject to immediate ejection.

The base path is considered three (3) feet on either side of a straight line in-between the base and the runner when a play is being made on the runner. A path is not established until the ball comes into play. If a runner goes out of the base path to avoid being tagged, that player is out and the ball is considered dead.

The original placement of the base is considered the base, even if it slides away or is moved. If a runner was safe and the base slides away, the runner cannot be tagged out if they are in close proximity of where the base was. If a runner approaches the base that has been moved due to a previous play, that runner does not need to go out of his/her way to find the base. Runners only need to go into the area where the base would have been. If a sliding runner grabs the base and during his/her slide, carries the base past the intended location, the runner may be tagged out. **This is a judgement call and cannot be appealed.**

A safety base will be placed on the foul side of first base. All batters/runners are required to run at that base on a close force play at first. The safety base is no longer in play after the batter/runner has run through it.
Pitching & Fielding
Defense will pitch to the offense and must pitch to all batters.

A pitcher must:
- Must be touching the pitcher’s rubber; and
- Must come to a complete stop (~1 second) with the ball in front of the body while facing the patter prior to pitching

A pitch will be considered legal when:
- Delivered underhand with an arc of 6-12 feet off the ground;
- Released at a moderate speed;
- It is not a “quick return” pitch; and
- It does not cause unnecessary delay once the batter is ready

An illegal pitch will:
- Be declared immediately; and
- Result in a ball if the batter does not swing. If the batter swings, the ball is considered in play

When a ball is thrown of the field of play, or gets stuck within the field of play, all runners are awarded two (2) bases from the last base gained. Determination of bases awarded is governed by the position of the runner(s) when the ball left the thrower’s hand.

Additional Rules for CoRec
Teams must alternate males and females in the batting order. If a team bats nine (9) players, an out will be recorded in the lineup when two (2) males or females bat consecutively. The difference of between the number of males and females on a team may not exceed one (1).

Position requirements are as follows:
- The pitcher and catcher must be of opposite sexes; and
- The infield and outfield must have two (2) males and two (2) females
Definitions

Infield Fly
Any time there are less than two (2) outs and runners on first and second or bases loaded, the infield fly rule will be in effect.

- For the rule to be called, the batter must contact the ball and the trajectory of the ball must be of ordinary effort for the infield to make a play on the ball in the infield. The ball must be a fair ball and the apex of the ball will be at the discretion of the umpire which cannot be protested;
- Once called by the umpire, with their index finger out and pointing vertically, runners advance at their own risk, force outs will not be in effect.

Obstruction
When a fielder does not have the ball and is not in the act of fielding a batted ball, an obstruction occurs if that fielder impedes the progress of a base runner. When a base runner is obstructed, they shall not be called out until they have reached the base in question. Once they have reached the base, they are no longer protected. The ball is live throughout this entire process.

Sportsmanship
Teams will receive a sportsmanship rating each week, at the Recreational Sport staff’s discretion, on a scale of 1.0 – 5.0, that will create an average at the end of the season. Teams must have an average of 3.0 or above to be eligible for playoff participation. Sportsmanship ratings are outlined as follows:

5.0 = Superior
Teams receiving a 5.0 sportsmanship rating are outwardly enthusiastic and courteous to other teams, other players, and the Recreational Sport staff.

4.0 = Good
Teams receiving a 4.0 sportsmanship rating are respectful, have pleasant behavior, and receive no warnings.

3.0 = Average
Teams receiving a 3.0 sportsmanship rating have an overall acceptable behavior, some issues may occur with individual participants, teams receive and adhere to verbal warnings, and no unsportsmanlike conduct occurs.

2.0 = Poor
Teams receiving a 2.0 sportsmanship rating have shown little control over their unsportsmanlike behavior, have received multiple unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, and no ejections have occurred.

1.0 = Unacceptable
Teams receiving a 1.0 sportsmanship rating have no control over unsportsmanlike behavior and one or more ejections occur.

If you have any further questions, please contact us via email: bwconrad@coastal.edu