



# Blackburn Ladies Softball League

## Rules and Regulations

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**Note:** The Blackburn Ladies Softball League follows rules established by Softball Canada unless specified below.

### 1.0 Game Rules

- 1a. Games will be played at the ball diamond behind Lois Kemp Arena, 200 Glen Park Drive, Ottawa, ON.
- 1b. The early game begins at 6:30pm and the late game at 8:30pm. Any warm ups should be done before these start times. **Games will start promptly.** Delays in start time may result in disciplinary measures.
  - i. A team unable to field seven players (min. six registered players and one spare) by game time will be allowed a 15 minute grace period. A forfeit will be declared if a team is unable to field seven players after this time.
  - ii. Official game start time will be noted by the umpire and team Executive after delivery of the first pitch.
- 1c. Each team can score a maximum of five runs per inning, except the last inning. Each half inning concludes when either the fielding team achieves three outs OR the batting team scores five runs.
  - i. If the fifth run scores during a play, the play should stop immediately after the player crosses the line at home plate provided that all other runners are safe at their bags. No other runs will count.
- 1d. All regular season games have a 7-inning maximum. When 7 innings cannot be completed, the umpire will declare any inning that starts 90 minutes after the official start time as the last inning (+/- 5 minutes). The last inning must be called at the beginning of the inning.
  - i. It is not necessary to play a complete final inning when the home team has more

runs before their half of the final inning or before three outs are recorded.

- 1e. It is **mandatory** for all pitchers to wear an infielder's mask while pitching.
- 1f. It is **mandatory** for all catchers to wear full catcher's gear (helmet, mask, chest protector and shin guards) while catching.
- 1g. Only running shoes or rubber cleats may be worn.

## **2.0 Pitching – Orthodox Style**

- 2a. Legal delivery will be a ball which is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion. Above the shoulder backswing will be tolerated. Other types of pitches (windmill, overhand) will constitute an illegal pitch, resulting in a ball awarded to the batter.
- 2b. Pitchers may begin with only one foot on the pitching rubber at the start of delivery.
- 2c. Pitchers must release the ball below the waist.
- 2d. No warm up pitches are to be thrown to any player who is not wearing full catcher's gear.
- 2e. A pitcher may pitch a maximum of five innings.
  - a. A second pitcher must enter the game either in or before the fourth inning of play.

## **3.0 Batting**

- 3a. Batting helmets must be worn when batting and running bases.
- 3b. Where a catcher fails to catch the third strike, the batter may run to first base if there are less than two outs and first base is unoccupied OR there are two outs.
- 3c. All bats must be approved by the Eastern Ontario Umpires Association.

## **4.0 Base Running**

- 4a. Stealing bases, including home is permitted. A base runner may leave their base as soon as the ball leaves the pitcher's hand
- 4b. A double bag will be used at first base.
- 4c. There is a **commitment line** between third base and home.
  - i. The line is drawn approximately 20ft from the back point of home base on the third base line. It runs perpendicular to the base line, terminating at the fence.
  - ii. A second, 'home plate,' line will be drawn from the corner of home plate closest to third base. It runs perpendicular to the base line, terminating at the backstop.
  - iii. The space between the commitment line and the home plate line is designated the 'commitment zone'
  - iv. Runners must proceed towards the home plate line after crossing the commitment line.
  - v. For a runner to score, she must cross the line of the plate AND touch the ground before the catcher is in possession of the ball while touching the plate.
  - vi. Runners cannot touch home plate.
  - vii. No tags are permitted within the commitment zone. A runner is automatically safe and the run is counted if they are tagged within the commitment zone.
- 4d. A base runner will be called out if she:
  - i. Does not return to the base or proceed to the next base once the pitcher is within an eight foot radius of the pitching rubber.
  - ii. Leaves the base before the pitch has left the pitcher's hand.
  - iii. Touches home plate when scoring.

#### 4e. Substitute Runner

- i. Any injured player may request a substitute runner.
  - i. Substitute runners may be requested at the outset of the game or at any point throughout the game.
  - ii. Once a substitute runner is requested, the injured player must continue to request a substitute runner for the duration of the game.
- ii. All players must reach first base before a substitute runner can replace them.
- iii. The substitute runner is the last batter in the batting order who is not on base (i.e., the last available batter).
- iv. Pitchers and catchers due to play in the next inning can request a substitute runner when there are two outs or the fifth run is on base (unless the last inning has been called and runs are unlimited, then the fifth run on base is irrelevant), regardless of which base they are on.
- v. Pitchers and catchers due to play in the next inning are exempt from substitute running if there are two outs or the fifth run is on base (unless the last inning has been called and runs are unlimited, then the fifth run on base is irrelevant).

#### **5.0 League Standings**

- 5a. League standings will be determined by a point system.
  - i. Teams are awarded 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, and 0 points for a loss.
- 5b. If there is a tie after points are calculated, it will be broken by evaluating:
  - i. Teams' records against each other (most wins gets the higher seed)
  - ii. Best of three rock, paper, scissors competition between the tied teams' Executive members.

#### **6.0 Field Conditions**

- 6a. Poor field conditions may include, but are not limited to: oversaturated soil, pooled water, field damage, hazardous weather conditions, field visibility, large obstacles on the field.
- 6b. In cases of poor field conditions prior to or during game time:
  - i. An Executive member will inform the Team Representative and umpires by 4:30pm if the games are cancelled.
  - ii. Players are expected to go to the diamond and be ready to play if they have not heard from the Team Representative by 5:30pm for the early game and 7:30pm for the late game.
- 6c. Once at the diamond, the umpire has the sole discretion to cancel and/or end a game.

#### **7.0 Cancelled Games**

- 7a. If five (4.5 if the home team is winning) or more innings have been played, the game will be considered finished and the score will revert to the last completed inning.
- 7b. If fewer than five innings have been completed, the game will be rescheduled and played from the beginning.
- 7c. There are slots in the existing schedule to accommodate cancellations. Cancelled games will be played on the first available date. All re-scheduled games must be approved by the Executive.

#### **8.0 Player Requirements**

- 8a. A player is eligible to play once they meet the registration criteria outlined in the Blackburn Ladies Softball League By-Laws.
- 8b. All teams' players must play at least four full innings by the end of the fifth inning.
- 8c. A team must be able to field seven players (including spares) for the game to start. Of the seven players, six must be registered to the team.
  - i. Game start time based on player availability subject to Section 1b.i.
- 8d. Any player who arrives prior to the start of the third inning (i.e., first pitch of the third inning is thrown) is eligible to play. They must be listed at the bottom of the batting order.
  - i. Players are not entitled to a minimum of four innings in a game where they arrive late.
  - ii. Late or absent players may be added or removed from the lineup prior to the start of the third inning without incurring an automatic out.
  - iii. Players who do not arrive before the completion of the second inning will be removed from the scorecard. They are not eligible to play if they arrive after the third inning has started.

## **9.0 Spares**

- 9a. Spares must be registered on the spares list or be a regular player on another team to be eligible to play.
- 9b. Approval of spares is at the discretion of the Executive.
- 9c. All efforts will be made to ensure spares are of a calibre equivalent to the average of all absent players from the regular roster.
  - i. Players on the Registered Spares List will receive priority contact over full time players to fill spare positions.
- 9d. Teams must have a minimum of six regular team players in order to call spares.
- 9e. Spares cannot be called if 10 regular team members are available to play, unless subject to section 9h. Spare Pitchers
- 9f. Teams can only request enough spares to bring the number of players to ten.
- 9g. If a regular player shows up unexpectedly and a spare has been asked to play, the spare has the right to play her minimum first four innings. See section 8d for how many innings the regular player is entitled to play.
- 9h. Spare Pitchers
  - i. Teams may request a spare pitcher(s) when they are missing both a primary and secondary pitcher.
  - ii. Teams must field a minimum of six regular team players to be eligible for a spare pitcher.
  - iii. Spare pitchers cannot pitch more than four innings.
    - i. When a team can field 10 players, including the spare pitcher, the pitcher may play any other positions except catcher when not pitching.
  - iv. In the case where a team can field 10 regular team players but both the primary and secondary pitchers are missing:
    - i. A spare pitcher may be requested.
    - ii. The spare can ONLY play pitcher (e.g., the spare pitcher cannot displace a regular player in a fielding position).
    - iii. The spare pitcher cannot play more than four innings.
  - v. All efforts will be made to ensure that spare pitchers are of a calibre equivalent

to the average of the absent players.

### **10.0 Conduct and Commitment**

- 10a. In the spirit of good sportsmanship and teamwork, players are asked to inform their Team Representatives of any planned absences. If a player does not show up three times or more without prior notice, the team may ask the Executive to have that player taken off their roster.
- 10b. Players should leave any inappropriate language/behaviour away from the ball field. Maligning of the umpires or fellow players will not be allowed.
- 10c. A disciplinary committee will be gathered consisting of the President or Vice-President and a Team Representative to go over the umpire's report and recommendation for all players that have been ejected from a game.

### **11.0 Home Team Responsibilities**

- 11a. The home team will use the bench along the third base line.
- 11b. Keep score throughout the game. Teams should verify scores regularly to avoid conflict after the game. The home team is required to convey the final score to the Webmaster.
- 11c. Prior to the early game, the team will put out the equipment for both teams, chalk the first base, third base, commitment, and home plate lines, and set up all bases and the pitching rubber.
- 11d. The home team for the early game will provide the umpire with a new softball.
  - i. No new balls will be introduced for the later game, unless requested by the umpire.
- 11e. After the late game, the team will put away all equipment, bases, and lock up.

### **12.0 Visiting Team Responsibilities**

- 12a. The visiting team will use the bench along the first base line.
- 12b.** Keep score throughout the game. Teams should verify scores regularly to avoid conflict after the game.
- 12c. If available, help the home team with set up and tear down.

### **13.0 Playoffs**

- 13a. Playoffs will follow a double-elimination seeded format.
- 13b. Regular Blackburn Ladies Softball League Rules and Regulations and Softball Canada rules apply to all playoff games unless specified below.
- 13c. Innings
  - i. All playoff games will consist of seven innings and have no time limit, unless section 13.c.ii. comes into effect.
    - i. It is not necessary to play a complete final inning when the home team has more runs before their half of the final inning or before three outs are recorded.
    - ii. Team Executives may choose to conclude the game anytime after five innings if one team is up by 10 or more runs. Under these conditions, teams must agree to waive open-inning/unlimited runs announcement.
  - ii. In the event of poor field conditions (see Section 6.0), the game will be considered complete if five innings or more are finished. If less than five innings are completed, the game will be rescheduled and played from the beginning.

13d. Home and Away

- i. Home team for all playoff games will be determined from the final standings in the regular season. The higher seeded team will be the home team. See Section 5.0 League Standings for how this is determined.

13e. Game Readiness

- i. Both teams will assist with getting the equipment out, setting up the bases, and lining the field.
- ii. Executive members will line the field for the final series.

13f. Spares

- i. All spares must be approved by the Executive.
- ii. Spares must have played a minimum of two games during the regular season to be eligible to play during the playoffs.
- iii. No full time players can spare during playoff games, unless approved by the Executive. Priority must be given to the registered Spares List.
- iv. No spares can play in the final series, unless approved by the Executive.
- v. Exceptions for spare pitcher requests are made at the discretion of the Executive.

13g. Tie Game after Seven Innings.

- i. Games must have a winner; therefore, games will continue until a winner is declared.
- ii. At the beginning of each extra inning, the last player to bat in the previous inning will start at second base.
- iii. Pitchers may go over the five inning maximum if extra innings are needed.

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THIS IS A RECREATIONAL LEAGUE. WE WANT  
ALL PLAYERS TO DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS AND HAVE FUN!**

**Last updated: March. 2025\_nl**