



Blackburn Ladies Softball League

Rules and Regulations

Game Rules

1. Games will be played at the Blackburn Arena diamond.
2. 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.
3. A maximum of five runs can be scored per team in an inning, regardless of the number of outs, except for the last inning. The last inning has unlimited runs.
4. If the fifth run scores during a play, the play should stop immediately after a player crosses the line at home plate provided that all other runners are safe at their bags. No other runs will count.
5. The umpire must declare any inning that starts **90 minutes after the beginning of the game** as the last inning. The umpire has a five minute discretion on either side of the time limit, depending on the speed of play. The last inning of the game must be called at the beginning of the inning, as it has unlimited runs.
6. Both teams' scores should be verified regularly to avoid conflicts after the game.
7. The infield fly rule comes into effect when there are less than two outs and both first and second bases are occupied. An infield fly is a **fair** fly that is playable by an infielder (in the umpire's opinion). The batter is automatically out. If the fly is not caught, the base runners may advance at their own risk (but are not forced to run). This rule is in effect to prevent a ball being intentionally dropped, resulting in an easy double play attempt.
8. It is **mandatory** for all pitchers to wear an infielder's mask while pitching.
9. It is **mandatory** for all catchers to wear full catcher's gear (helmet, mask, chest protector and shin guards)
10. Only running shoes or rubber cleats may be worn.

11. **HALO RULE NOTE:** *This rule may not be protested and is at the sole discretion of the umpire.*

The pitcher's box (halo zone) is defined as four feet in front of the pitcher's rubber and 1 foot on either side of the rubber. The side lines of the halo zone will be defined by chalk on the playing field.

A pitcher that is hit by a ball within the halo zone will result in the play being called a "dead ball," and treated as a foul ball, with all runners returning to their bases.

This includes when the pitcher makes a defensive move within the halo zone to knock the ball down, or must duck out of the way.

The hit will count as a strike against the batter, if the count has less than two strikes. If the batter has two strikes against her, the hit will not count as a 3rd strike; a batter cannot be called out on this play.

However, if the pitcher catches a line drive hit inside the halo zone, it will be treated as a caught ball, and the batter is out. Players on base may steal, after tagging their base.

If the ball hits the ground prior to the pitching rubber, it is considered a playable ball, regardless if the pitcher is in the halo zone. The play will continue, with a force play on first.

This rule may not be protested and is at the sole discretion of the umpire.

Pitching – Orthodox Style

Legal delivery will be a ball which is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion. Above the shoulder back swing will be tolerated. Other types of pitches (windmill, overhand) will constitute as an illegal pitch.

1. No warm up pitches are to be thrown to any player who is not wearing catcher's gear (helmet, mask, chest protector, shin guards).
2. A maximum of five warm up pitches are allowed for each NEW pitcher in their first inning of pitching.
3. A maximum of three warm up pitches are allowed after the pitcher's first inning of pitching.
4. A pitcher may pitch a maximum of five innings.
5. A spare pitcher can pitch a maximum of three innings.
6. Pitchers must start with both feet on the plate at the start of delivery.
7. Pitchers must release the ball below the waist.

Batting

1. Batting helmets must be worn when batting and running bases.
2. 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.
3. A batter, who intentionally throws her bat recklessly, will be ejected from the game.
4. All bats must be approved by the Eastern Ontario Umpires Association.
5. Halo Rule will be applied as necessary (see: Game Rules)

Base Running

1. Stealing bases, including home is permitted. A base runner cannot leave a base until the pitch has crossed the plate.
2. A double bag will be used at first base.
 - When there is play made at first base, the **batter** must touch the outside (**orange**) bag and the **fielder** must touch the inside (**white**) bag, unless a play is made on the opposite side for safety reasons. This play is usually made when the catcher is throwing to first base.
 - The player's status (safe or out) at the bag will be affected if the wrong bag is touched by either the fielder or the batter.
 - Once the player has touched the orange bag, she must move to the white side.
 - While standing at first base, only the white bag is in play.
3. There is a **commitment line** between third base and home.
 - This line is drawn to avoid collisions and injuries at the plate.
 - Once any base runner crosses this line, she is committed to go home.
 - For safety reasons, a tag is not permitted at home.
 - For the runner to score, she must cross the line of the plate before the catcher is in possession of the ball while touching the plate.
 - The runner must not touch home plate or they will be called out. Runners are strongly encouraged to run away from the catcher between home plate and the fence in foul territory.
 - If the catcher deliberately tags the runner in the commitment area, the runner is automatically called safe and the run is counted.
4. A base runner will be called out if she:
 - Does not return to the base or proceed to the next base once the pitcher has re-entered the eight foot radius of the mound.
 - Leaves the base before the pitch has crossed the plate.
 - Breaks the baseline while running by deviating outside the three (3) foot line if a play is being made.
 - Intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.
 - Touches home plate when scoring.

5. Substitute Runner

- Should a player become injured and require a substitute runner, they can be replaced with a pinch runner once the batter reaches first base but may not advance past first base.
- The substitute runner is the last batter in the batting order who is not on base – the last available batter.
- The catcher due to play in the next inning can request a pinch runner when there are two outs.
- The catcher due to play in the next inning is exempt from being a pinch runner.

Final Standings

Final standings will be determined following these criteria:

1. Total points earned during the season – 2pts for a win, 1pt for a tie.
2. Record against each other.
3. Most wins.
4. Least runs against.

Weather

In case of bad weather prior to or during game time:

1. An Executive member will inform the Team Representative and umpires by 4:30pm if the games are cancelled.
2. 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.
3. Once at the diamond, the umpire has the sole discretion to cancel a game.
4. Once a game is in progress, it is up to the umpire to call the game due to weather conditions or safety reasons.

Cancelled Games

1. If five or more innings have been completed, the game will be considered complete and the score will revert to the last inning.
2. If less than five innings have been completed, the game will be rescheduled and played from the beginning.
3. The Scheduler will reschedule with input from the appropriate Team Representatives. There are slots in the existing schedule to accommodate re-scheduled games. They will be played on the first available date. **No game should be re-scheduled between teams before consulting the Scheduler.**

Player Requirements

1. All teams' players must play at least four full innings. The fourth inning of a player on a visiting team must not be slotted for the seventh inning in case the full inning is not necessary.
2. A team unable to field seven players (including spares) by game time, will be allowed a 15 minute grace period. After 15 minutes, the team will forfeit if they still do not have seven players.

Spares

1. Spares must be registered on the spares list or be a regular player on another team to be eligible to play.
2. All spares must be of equivalent or lesser calibre than the average calibre of all missing players from the regular roster in order to maintain balanced teams throughout the season. Approval of spares is at the discretion of the Executive.
3. Teams must have a minimum of six regular team players in order to call spares.
4. Spares cannot be called if 10 regular team members are available to play.
5. Teams can only call enough spares to bring the number of players to ten.
6. 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, in addition to the regular player.
7. Spares must have played a minimum of four games during the regular season to be eligible for the playoffs. **It is to everyone's advantage to call spares from the spares list before using regular players.**
8. No regular players can spare during playoffs, unless approved by the Executive.
9. No spares can play in the FINAL game, unless approved by the Executive.
10. Spares must pay \$5 to play. Exceptions only to full-time players who are sparing. An Exec member on the team will collect payment from the spare and give it to the Treasurer.
11. Spares can play a maximum of five times per team and a total of 10 times per season. Full-time players are also subject to this rule.
12. Any spares, both from the spares list or regular full-time players, must be indicated on the scoresheet AND added to the tracker in the Master Binder in the green box.

Conduct and Commitment

1. 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.
2. Players are also asked to leave any inappropriate language/behaviour away from the ball field. Maligning of the umpires or fellow players will not be allowed.
3. 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.

Home Team Responsibilities

The bench closest to the equipment box is assigned to the home team.

The home team is responsible for:

1. Putting out the equipment, bases and lining the field at least 15 minutes before each early game. Instructions for placing bases and pitcher's mound can be found in the equipment box and in the team binders.
2. Putting away equipment, bases, filling in the holes and locking the boxes after each late game.
3. **Entering the game's final score online within 48 hours.**
4. It is not necessary to turn off the lights. They will automatically turn off at 11:00pm.

Visiting Team Responsibilities

1. If they're available, they can help the Home team with setting up and tearing down field.

Pregnancy

We have adopted the guidelines set by Softball Canada below:

1. A pregnant player must get clearance from her Doctor to play and it must be in writing.
2. The player should sign a waiver specifically absolving the league, its participants, umpires, the facility owner, the province and Softball Canada of any liability should she experience problems with her pregnancy due to her participation.
3. Copies of the waiver should be given to the Executive as well as the Umpire's Association contracted to do the games the player participants in.

Playoffs, Including Finals

Double eliminated seeded.

1. Innings
 - a. All playoff games will play all seven innings and have no time limit.
 - b. In the event of inclement weather, 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.
2. Home and Away
 - a. 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.
3. Game Readiness
 - a. For playoffs, both teams will assist with getting the equipment out, setting up the bases, and lining the field except for the final series where the Executive will line the field.

4. Pitching
 - a. Pitchers are still limited to five innings for a regular seven inning game. If a game goes into extra innings, that rule is waived to allow teams to use their stronger pitchers if they wish.

5. Tie Game after Seven Innings.
 - a. Games must have a winner; therefore, games will continue until a winner is declared.
 - b. At the beginning of each extra inning, the last player to bat in the previous inning will start at second base.

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

*Any rule not outlined above defers to Softball Canada rules.

Last updated: April 2019