

## ARENA SOFTBALL LEAGUE

### Playing Rules – Last updated 12/22/14

●OFFICIAL RULES SHALL BE THE CURRENT SENIOR SOFTBALL-USA RULE BOOK●

In addition, the following local Rules shall also be used taking precedence over a SS-USA rule:

1. All games are seven (7) innings unless extra innings are required. Tiebreaker rule: Last official batter starts on second base. A courtesy runner is not allowed for this runner until he reaches third base. In order for a game to be official, the losing team must bat five (5) times. Time limit for ALL games played at Lady Lake field, including the last scheduled game, is 1 hour and 15 minutes. After 1 hour, the umpire will announce that the current inning will be finished, and one more inning will be played.

2. If there is a tie for 1st Place at the end of the regular season, a single elimination game or games can be played, schedule permitting, else head to head will be used as a tiebreaker. If still tied, then total season average run differential will be used as the tie-breaker.

3. No game may be canceled unless the field is unplayable or the weather is unfavorable (i.e., rain, cold, heat). The two managers of the game will make this decision. A team canceling a game for any other reason will forfeit the game. Canceled game(s) will be made up when a partial day's schedule is played and the canceled game(s) would change first place in the final standings.

#### 4. Substitutes

4.1 If a team fields eleven (11) roster players for a game then they cannot obtain a sub for the missing 12<sup>th</sup> player, with the possible exception of Pitcher. If there is one or more additional roster players with "P" (pitcher) as a potential preferred position (as noted on pre-season draft documents) then one of those will pitch. If there is no other roster player with "P" noted above, a pitcher can be obtained as a sub (making a total of 12 players) in accordance with sections 4.3 and 4.4 below.

4.2 There is no limit on the number of substitutes required, but all subs must be currently playing on an Arena team or listed on the approved sub list.

4.3 If "protected" players were designated prior to a season(s) draft, then a substitute for a drafted "non-protected player" can come from the approved sub list OR can be a drafted "non-protected player" from an Arena team.

4.4 Any player playing on an Arena team or listed on the approved sub list can sub for a "protected player".

4.5 Managers are strongly encouraged to utilize the approved sub list whenever possible.

4.6 An Arena roster player can only play two games per day, i.e. a scheduled game plus one additional game as a sub OR two games as a sub on a "Bye" day. Substitutes on the approved sub list are not game limited.

4.7 Substitutes must bat last.

4.8 Substitutes from an Arena team roster cannot be used as a courtesy runner. Substitutes from the official sub list CAN be used as a courtesy runner.

5. In case of injury, illness or any other valid reason for leaving the game, and no substitute is available, the player's spot shall be skipped and no out declared. The player may not return to the game.

#### 6. Replacement players.

6.1 A temporary replacement player is a player from the sub list replacing an injured, absent (lengthy), or ill player listed on the original team roster. Such injured, absent or ill player will be listed on the roster as "injured reserve/not playing" in anticipation of returning to active playing status during the season or for the subsequent season.

6.1.1 Temporary replacement players can only play for a total of 4 consecutive game dates (BYE is excluded, rainout is included) and cannot repeat such for the same team in the same season.

6.2 A permanent replacement player is a player from the sub list replacing an original roster player that has permanently withdrawn from the Arena League for any reason (health, personal, etc.), i.e. for the remainder of a season and future seasons.

6.3 Managers needing to select temporary or permanent replacement players can select anyone from the official sub list and provide written (email is ok) confirmation to the Commissioner designating the following:

- a) Name of replacement player (from sub list) and the roster player being replaced.
- b) Type of replacement player (temporary vs. permanent)
- c) Starting game date and ending game date (maximum of 4 consecutive game dates) for a temporary replacement.
- d) Written documentation (email is ok) from a roster player permanently withdrawing from the league, and requiring a permanent replacement.

6. Drafted, protected roster players can be used as a courtesy runner one (1) time per inning.

7. First Base. A double bag shall be used at first base with the double portion of the bag being in foul territory. If, in the judgment of the umpire, there is a play on a batter-runner going to first base, the batter-runner must touch only the bag in foul territory. He is at risk of being called out if he fails to do so, except to avoid a collision in the judgment of the umpire. This is not an appeal play. The defensive player must touch a portion of the bag inside fair territory to make the putout but can have part of his foot on the bag in foul territory and still record an out. The defensive player touching ONLY the bag in foul territory will not result in an out.

The separately colored bags are considered merged after a batter-runner becomes a base runner, i.e. once the batter-runner becomes a base runner (after ceasing to be a batter-runner) the two portions of the bag are considered "merged" for both offensive and defensive purposes.

#### 8. Force Plays: Senior Softball Rules apply. Force Plays occur ONLY when:

- a) A base runner must return to a base because of a caught line drive or fly ball.
- b) A base runner **must advance** to the next base because an uncaught batted ball by a succeeding hitter forces him to touch the next base.
- c) In all other cases, Arena League uses regular Senior Softball rules whereby runners must be tagged in a non-force out situation.

#### 9. Infield Fly

9.1 An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with an ordinary effort when there are runners on 1st and 2nd or on 1st, 2nd and 3rd and less than two outs.

9.2 Any player who positions himself in the infield at the start of the pitch shall be considered an infielder for the purpose of this rule. The infield is defined as that portion of the field, which includes areas normally covered by infielders.

9.3 When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpires shall immediately declare, "Infield Fly - The batter is out" for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near a foul line, the umpires shall declare, "Infield Fly - The batter is out if fair." If a declared infield fly becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

9.4 In an infield fly, the ball is alive and runners may advance at their own risk. Any runner can tag up and advance once the ball is first touched by a fielder.

9.5 Failure of the umpire to call "Infield Fly" does not negate the Infield Fly. If the error is discovered prior to the next pitch, the Infield Fly rule may still be called. **The batter is out and all runners will return to the base occupied before the last pitch was thrown.**

10. Contact: A runner must make every effort to avoid colliding with opposing players while running the bases. If a runner misses a base to avoid a collision, the runner may not be called out (umpire's judgment).

10.1 If a runner fails to avoid a collision, fails to allow a player's opportunity to field a thrown ball or fails to give a fielder the opportunity to complete a double play throw, then the runner is out, and if in the judgment of the umpire the runner did not allow the fielder to complete a double play, both runners can be called out. The fielder does not have to throw the ball to have the second runner called out (umpire's judgment).

10.2 If the umpire rules deliberate contact on the part of the defensive player, the runner shall be called safe.

11. Sliding / Hard Slides. Sliding or diving into first base or the Scoring Plate is not permitted, and such players will be called out. However, a player may slide or dive into second or third bases and when returning to any base, except the Scoring Plate. In addition to the Contact rules as stipulated in Section 9 above, if, in the umpire's judgment, the contact by the runner was deliberate, the runner may be in jeopardy of being ejected from the game.

11.1 In the interest of safety, players should avoid a hard slide into a base to "break up a double play" if they are going to be out by a substantial margin. The player can be warned by an umpire.

12. RUN LIMIT: A team is limited to five (5) runs per inning; however, if a team is losing by more than 5 runs, it may score 5 runs or half the difference (rounded up to the nearest run) whichever is greater, between its score and the leading team's score.

One extra run may be scored on a home run over the fence (5+1 or catch-up +1). In the last inning and any extra innings, there is no run limit.

13. All bats must meet the specifications set by Senior Softball-USA.

14. The flip-flop rule is per SS-USA, i.e. invoked voluntarily by the managers of both teams when there is a 10-Run or greater differential in favor of the visiting team at the start of the "Open Inning".

15. The mercy rule will be enforced for a team trailing by 15 or more runs after five (5) complete innings.
16. Home runs allowed only with ASA approved bats; home runs with non-approved ASA bats are dead ball outs.
17. Hit and sit after a home run applies to batter and base runners.
18. The one-up home run rule goes into effect after a team's third Over-The-Fence home run (OTF). Any subsequent OTF home runs hit with ASA approved bats before the other team reaches three OTF home runs will be a single. Upon both teams reaching three OTFs, the allowed OTF total increments by one (with singles for additional OTFs) until again matched by the other team. This one-up increment continues until game end. Base runners only advance if they are pushed.
19. Ball entering dead ball territory through the gap in Sacks Field's centerfield (beyond the boundary defined by extending the outfield boundary fence across the gap):
  - 19.1 The ball is dead, and all runners are awarded two bases (typical "ground rule double").
  - 19.2 If, in the umpire's judgment, a fielder INTENTIONALLY causes the ball to go through the gap from playable territory into dead ball territory, then the ball is dead. Each runner is awarded two bases from the last base touched at the time the fielder intentionally caused the ball to enter dead ball territory.
20. A ball hitting ANY PART of the dugout shelter or the scorer's building (including any overhanging portions of a roof) will immediately become a DEAD BALL.
21. The official softball of the League shall be the Yellow Trump Stote AK, twelve (12) inch, .44 core ball with a compression ratio no higher than 375.
22. The home team must furnish one (1) brand new, and one (1) very good used ball for each game.
23. All protests must be settled on the field at the time the protested incident occurs.
24. Unless otherwise changed by unanimous decision of commissioners and managers, new players or subs must be in The Villages Rec Division 2 (or equivalent for non-Villages residents). Once in the league (roster player or on approved sub list), a player can move to Rec Division 1 or equivalent without jeopardizing Arena participation. Players moving to Rec Div 3 or lower may no longer participate.
25. Conduct that is contrary to the concept of "Good Sportsmanship", whether verbal or physical, will not be tolerated. This includes action prior to, during, or after a game whether at the Lady Lake complex or any other ballpark. Poor sportsmanship by an individual brings discredit to all members of the league. The term "Poor Sportsmanship" is intended to be very broad. In the event of an incident, depending upon severity, the manager of the player or players in question will take appropriate action. In those cases where further action is required, the league managers, in conjunction with the league Board, will determine what further action is necessary. This decision will be final, and there will be no appeal.