

Nortel Networks Mixed Softball League Playing Rules

Last Updated: 2009-05-19

Contents

Related Documents	2
League Information.....	3
Mandate.....	3
Abuse Policy	3
Rules	3
Alcohol.....	3
Playing Rules	4
Equipment.....	4
Masks	4
Cleats.....	4
Bats	4
Gloves	4
Bases	4
Game Balls	
The Playing Field.....	4
Field Setup:	4
Postponing a Game	5
Postponing a Game Before Game Time	5
Diamond Unplayable	6
Game-in-Progress Called	6
Forfeits	6
Forfeiting a Game	6
Teams ready to play	7
The Game.....	7
Home Team.....	7
Length of Game	8
Start and End Time	8
Defensive Lineup	8
Warm-ups.....	8
Minimum Number of Same Sex	9
Changing the Batting Order	9
Ties.....	9
Bench Manners	9
Pitching	10
Strike Zone.....	11
Pitching Line	12
Batting.....	12
Batting Order	12
Three Strikes	12
Base on Balls:	12

Hit by a Pitch	12
Fly Ball.....	13
Foul Tip.....	13
Interference	13
Base Running.....	13
Interference and Obstruction.....	13
Infield Fly Rule	16
Fair and Foul Balls:.....	16
Advancing	17
Ties at the Base	17
Overrunning First Base	17
Safety Base.....	17
Overthrows.....	18
Tagging Up	18
Leading Off.....	18
Hit by a Batted Ball.....	19
Leaving the Base Line	19
Two Runners on the Same Base	19
Stealing Home.....	19
Base Line Priority	21
Intentional Collisions:.....	21
Commitment Line and Safe Line:.....	22
Pinch Running Guidelines:	24
Sliding.....	24
Bunting.....	24
Umpiring	24
Providing Umpires	24
Equipment	25
Matching Score Sheets.....	25
Knowledge of Game	25
Complaints	25
Enforcing Rules	25
Appeals Process	25
Scoring	26
Mercy Rule.....	26
Score Sheets	26
Points.....	26
Umpire No-Shows	26
Default Game Scores	26

Related Documents

Administrative Rules – Nortel Networks Mixed Softball League Administrative Rules.

Ground Rules - ground rules for diamonds in use by league.

Code of Conduct – Discipline guideline

League Information

Mandate

The mandate of the Nortel Networks Mixed Softball League (the Softball League) is to provide a safe and fun league where ball players of all abilities can play recreational softball.

Abuse Policy

Team captains, players, and umpires are responsible for maintaining a friendly atmosphere. The league takes a zero-tolerance stance on abuse of any kind. Any incident involving verbal or physical abuse of others, or that shows disrespect for the Softball League's officers, or volunteers performing duties on behalf of the league, are not tolerated. Any incidents of abuse however minor should be reported to the league executive; they will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Rules

For most playing rules the Nortel Networks Mixed Softball League plays under the Official Orthodox Fast Pitch Softball Rules as given in the current Official Guide and Rule Book published by Softball Canada except where superseded by rules contained in this document. This document is not meant to be the complete rules for softball but rather specifies the league rules to be used during the game or highlights common rules in order to help league members from having to dig through the official rule book.

Alcohol

The permits signed by the league specifically state that alcoholic beverages are not permitted at the diamonds or in the vicinity of diamonds, including the parking lots. If this part of the permit is violated, we could lose all access to all the community diamonds. The League cannot operate without sufficient ball fields.

If any team brings alcohol to a game, the umpire will call the game and the team without alcohol will receive the win. The offending team/players must be reported to the league executive for further disciplinary action. Complaints of this sort will be dealt with on an individual basis. Suspensions of captains, players, and possibly teams will result.

If both teams have alcohol and the umpire files a complaint with the league, both teams may face suspension from the league.

Playing Rules

Equipment

Masks

Catchers and plate umpires **MUST** wear masks during the game. The mask must be properly worn at all times.

Cleats

Metal or nylon cleats or spikes are not permitted. Rubber or plastic cleats may be worn.

Bats

Only bats marked "Official Softball" bats may be used during the game. If the bat appears to be a softball bat, but the "Official Softball" marking is obscured by wear, the bat shall be considered legal. Bats declared illegal or non-approved by ASA may not be used for a league game. Details on ASA approved and non-approved bats can be found at: [Amateur Softball Association of America web site](#).

Bats marked "Official Baseball", "Official Little League", "Little League Bat", or "Official Slo-Pitch" are NOT legal, and must not be used.

Gloves

First Base gloves (i.e., first base "trappers" mitts) may be worn at any position.

Bases

Home teams are responsible for bringing bases

Game Balls

Home teams are responsible for providing a new game ball for their home games. A second used game ball can be provided by either team.

The Playing Field

Field Setup:

The umpires are responsible for field set-up. The teams may place the bases, but the umpires should verify that the distances and positioning of the bases are correct. The position of the bases (length of the baseline) is agreed on at the beginning of the game. It should be 60 feet (approximately 20 paces) from home plate to first base and from home plate to third base. If both team captains and the umpire agree, the bases can be moved only after full innings have been completed. Note: bases displaced during a play should be replaced to the agreed position immediately.

A Commitment Line will be drawn perpendicular to the third baseline, 20 feet (approx 6 paces) from home plate.

A Safe Line will be drawn by making a line from the part of home plate closest to third base to the backstop or side fence. This line is perpendicular to the third base line and parallel to the first base line. See rule [Commitment Line and Safe Line](#) for a description of the use of these lines.

Postponing a Game

Postponing a Game Before Game Time

Games may be postponed ahead of time if a representative from both playing teams and a representative from the umpiring team agree. Games may be cancelled, and a reschedule requested, ahead of time due to:

- poor weather earlier in the day has obviously made the diamond unplayable (see [Diamond Unplayable](#) for further information).
- when there is a heat/humidex warning advisory in effect at 3:30 pm as per http://weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/forecast/city_e.html?yow This would not affect 6:15 pm start games unless the heat/humidex warning is still in effect at 6:15 PM as per http://weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/forecast/city_e.html?yow
- If at least one calendar week notice is provided, a game may be re-scheduled due to company-sponsored events (departmental picnic, *general information sessions*, etc.), or other events that will prevent a team from having enough players.

In all other situations the decision to postponing a game should not occur before 3:30 pm and should be delayed until game time if possible, and should only be postponed because of poor weather conditions (i.e. heavy rain affecting visibility, darkness limiting visibility, lightning in the immediate vicinity, high winds, etc) or unsafe field conditions. Both teams and the umpires must agree to postpone a game before game time. In case of disagreement between the teams the umpires have the final decision

To reschedule a game, the home team captain must go to the [softball web page](#) under Administration. All rainout games must be submitted for rescheduling within 24 hours of the originally scheduled game. For instructions on how to submit a rainout go to the [softball web page](#) under "Administration".

Diamond Unplayable

The safety of player's and officials is of the utmost importance to the league. The league recommends not playing when field conditions may jeopardize the safety of players, officials, or spectators.

The umpire is the sole decision-maker of whether the diamond is in a playable condition. The umpire is encouraged to declare the diamond unplayable if any of the following situations exist:

- Standing water on the in-play area (fair or foul) of the diamond.
- Holes in the in-play area of the infield or outfield that may jeopardize players' safety.
- Foreign objects in the in-play area of the diamond. For example posts, or construction equipment.
- Visible lightning in the vicinity of the diamond.
- Any other existing condition that the umpire feels jeopardizes player, official or spectator safety.

When the umpire declares the diamond unplayable, this will negate a forfeit by either or both teams.

Game-in-Progress Called

The umpires may call a game in progress if for any reason conditions are no longer safe to play. Some examples of such conditions are lightning in the immediate area, darkness affecting visibility, rain affecting visibility, high winds, or unsafe field conditions. Although the umpires are encouraged to discuss suspending a game with the team captains, the umpire is the sole decision maker.

If a game in progress is called by the umpire due to weather or time violation (see [Umpiring](#)) and less than four (4) innings (three and one half if the home team is leading) have been played, the game will be rescheduled. Otherwise, the score at the end of the last completed inning is final.

The game is over if at any time during the game the losing team is unable to catch up. ([Mercy Rule](#))

Forfeits

Forfeiting a Game

If a team does not have seven (7) players show up for a game, they are given a loss and the opposing team is awarded a win of 7-0. This game shall be recorded as a forfeited game by the losing team.

If neither team has seven (7) players show up for a game, both teams are given a loss (No points are awarded). This game shall be recorded as 0-0 forfeit by both teams.

If a team begins a game but at some point during the game, before the game time limit has expired, drops below 7 players able to play, that team will be given a loss (regardless of the score at the time the team drops below the 7 player level). The opposing team shall record the win as 7-0.

Case: Team A has 7 players to start the game and is leading 12 to 8 in the 4th inning. One player is injured during the inning and unable to continue.

Ruling: Team A no longer has the minimum 7 players during the game and the game ends with Team A losing due to a forfeit.

Case: Team A has 7 players and is leading the game by a score of 10 to 9 in the 6th inning. At the completion of the 6th inning, the time is 6:08 (on a Carling Diamond). Since no one is waiting for the diamond, both team captains and the umpire agree to continue the game. Team A (the visiting team) scores 7 runs in the top half of the 7th inning to take a 17 to 9 lead. The time is now 6:20. Team A has a player who leaves due to other commitments, so they only have 6 players. Should Team B be accorded a win by forfeit since Team A no longer has the minimum number of players?

Ruling: The game has exceeded the regulation time (90 minutes) and therefore Team A does not forfeit the game. The score should revert back to the last complete inning played and recorded as a 10 to 9 win by Team A.

Teams ready to play

If one team does not have enough players to play at 10 minutes after the scheduled game time, the umpire shall score the first inning as 5 to 0 for the team that is ready to play and the game will start in the second inning. This rule must be applied strictly.

If one or both teams does not have enough players to play at 20 minutes after the scheduled game time the umpire shall declare a forfeit.

Case: At scheduled game time both teams can field seven players or more.

However the home team does not have any bases. Are they ready to play?

Ruling: The home team is not ready to play until they can field 7 players or more, and they have provided the bases. If the game starts more than 10 minutes late because of lack of bases, the home team should be penalized under this rule.

The Game

Home Team

The home team is determined by the schedule, and fields first.

Length of Game

Seven (7) innings constitute the regulation game, except where superseded by Game-in-Progress Called, specified in [Start and End Time](#) or the mercy rule specified in [Mercy Rule](#).

Start and End Time

All games MUST begin by the assigned game time. Our permits end at 6:00 p.m. on all city diamonds except the two diamonds at Carling.

All non-playoff games are slotted for 90 minutes from their assigned starting time.

New innings may not start after 1 hour 20 minutes from the scheduled starting time (e.g. 5:50pm for a 4:30 start, 6:05pm for a 4:45 start or 7:35pm for a 6:15 start) unless

- nobody is waiting to use the diamond; and
- both teams and the umpire agree to continue.

An inning in progress MUST be completed if no one is waiting for the diamond.

As soon as someone shows up to use the diamonds after 1.5 hours from the assigned game time, the game is over, and the score at the end of the last completed inning is final. (See [Game-in-Progress Called](#): for procedures on calling the game.)

Case: At 5:50 PM, according to the umpire's watch the inning ends. A discussion ensues as to whether another inning should be played. By the time the discussion ends it is 5:51. Should another inning be played?

Ruling: The critical component of this is the umpire's time at the end of the inning. If it is 5:50 or before at the end of the inning a new inning must be started.

Playoff games will have specific durations established and announced when the playoff schedule is published.

Defensive Lineup

The defensive team fields ten (10) players (except as outlined in [Minimum Number of Same Sex](#)). Teams may field a maximum of seven (7) of one sex.

Warm-ups

The pitcher is allowed one minute to complete a maximum of 5 warm-up pitches at the discretion of the umpire. Defensive players may bring balls onto the field of play for warm-ups after the start of the second inning only at the discretion of the umpire.

Umpires are asked to limit the number of warm-ups in order to play as many innings as possible.

Minimum Number of Same Sex

Teams must field a minimum of three (3) players of each sex, or the following penalties apply:

- Only two players of one sex (male or female): An automatic out is inserted in the batting lineup and one position is left open in the field.
- Only one player of one sex (male or female): An automatic out is inserted in the batting lineup, two positions are left open in the field, and a maximum of five (5) runs can be scored by that team in a single inning.
- Players present for a team are all the same sex: Two automatic outs are inserted in the batting lineup, three positions are left open in the field, and a maximum of five (5) runs can be scored by that team in a single inning.

Changing the Batting Order

The batting order may not be changed. Players who arrive late must be inserted at the end of the batting order. Players who leave early are removed from the batting order. Exception: eligible players arriving late replace any Automatic Outs in the batting order. Players leaving early that put the team in a situation where Automatic Outs are required will have their place in batting order replaced by an Automatic Out.

Ties

Ties must be played out if time permits. If scheduled time is over, ties may be left as ties or played out, if both teams and the umpires agree. (See [Game-in-Progress Called: , Start and End Time](#)).

Bench Manners

Players shall not make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about opposing players, officials or spectators, or commit other acts that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct. The penalty for violation is prompt ejection of the offender from the game. The umpire is the sole arbiter of unsportsmanlike conduct. (See Umpiring Guidelines).

A player ejected from the game shall leave the diamond and grounds immediately. All incidents of player ejection must be reported to the league executive for further disciplinary action.

It is the captains' responsibility to ensure that an ejected participant leaves the playing field area immediately. If the suspended participant does not leave the vicinity of the playing area in a timely manner (less than one minute), then the game will be suspended, and the participant's team will forfeit the game. All such incidents must be reported to the league for further disciplinary action.

All players not involved in the play must remain in the out-of-play area.

Pitching

All pitches must have an arc, and the arc must exceed the height of the batters head at some point during the pitch. Any pitch not conforming to these criteria is an illegal pitch and shall be called a ball.

The requirements of these pitching rules are:

- The pitcher shall release the ball at a moderate speed.
- The pitching hand must be below the hip at the time of release of the ball. (no whip pitches)
- The pitch must have a minimum arc of at least the top of the batters head.
- The pitch must not have an arc of more than 12 feet.
- The ball must be delivered on the first forward pass of the hand past the hip. (no windmills)

The intent of this rule is to permit hitters of all calibers to hit, and to create more action in the game by getting the ball in play quicker. That said, the league is permitting some latitude in the application of this rule. It is not the intent of this rule to punish pitchers who are throwing slow pitches, but who have trouble consistently throwing an arc higher than the batter's head. It is the league's interpretation that as long as the pitcher is meeting all of the other requirements the pitch does not need to conform precisely to the minimum arc limitation. In other words if the pitch is thrown with a perceptible arc in a manner which the batter can hit with reasonable effort, but the pitch did not reach the height of the batters head, the umpire is not obligated to call an "illegal pitch", as long as the umpire feels the pitcher is attempting to conform to the rule and the pitch is not of excessive speed to be hittable by the batter. The legality of the pitch and whether or not to call an "illegal pitch" is solely at the umpire's discretion.

Any pitcher who is throws a pitch with excessive speed shall be warned once, and on any subsequent offence shall be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The player is eligible to play at any other position on the field for the remainder of the game.

Spins are permitted on pitches.

If the batter swings at an illegal pitch the ball is in play and the batter accepts the outcome of the resulting play.

The umpire shall call "Illegal Pitch" loud enough for the batter to hear as soon as the pitch becomes illegal. Failure of the umpire to call "illegal pitch" while the ball is in the air does not affect the legality of the pitch.

Case: The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter. The pitched ball reaches a maximum height of 15 feet before beginning a downward arc toward the plate. The umpire loudly calls "Illegal Pitch" as soon as the ball goes higher than the maximum arc allowed.

Ruling: The pitch shall be declared a ball, and providing the batter does not swing at the pitched ball, the ball is dead and runners cannot advance.

Case: The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter. The pitched ball reaches a maximum height of 15 feet before beginning a downward arc toward the plate. The batter swings at the pitch and misses.

Ruling: Because the batter swings at the pitch, the pitch is no longer an illegal pitch and is declared a strike.

Case: The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter. The pitched ball reaches a maximum height of 15 feet before beginning a downward arc toward the plate. The umpire loudly calls “Illegal Pitch”. The batter swings at the pitch and hits it.

Ruling: Because the batter hits the ball, the pitch is no longer an illegal pitch. The ball is in play, and the play will continue to its conclusion.

Case: The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter. The pitched ball reaches a maximum height of 15 feet before beginning a downward arc toward the plate. As the batter swings at the pitch and hits it, the umpire calls “Illegal Pitch”.

Ruling: Because the batter hits the ball, the pitch is no longer an illegal pitch. The ball is in play, and the play will continue to its conclusion.

Case: The pitcher delivers the ball to the batter which in the judgment of the umpire is pitched with excessive speed. The umpire calls “Illegal Pitch”. The batter swings at the pitch and hits it.

Ruling: Because the batter hits the ball, the ball is in play, and the play will continue to its conclusion. The pitched ball was technically illegal as soon as the pitch was released. If this is the pitcher’s first excessive speed pitch, the pitcher shall still be warned, if this is the pitcher’s second excessive pitch he shall be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

Strike Zone

The strike zone is from the highest armpit to the top of the knees when the batter is in his normal hitting stance. If at the time the ball crosses the plate, if **ANY** part of the ball is over **ANY** part of the plate between the batter’s armpits and knees then the pitch is a strike. Umpires are asked to call not to reduce the size of the strike zone. A large strike zone speeds up the game.

Umpires are asked to take into account that that the ball may be coming into the strike zone on a high arc and may come through the strike zone on a downward arc. Remember if **ANY** part of the ball crosses through **ANY** part of the strike zone as the ball crosses the plate it should be considered to be a strike.

Normal hitting stance is the stance from which the batter swings at the ball. Some batters will crouch into an exaggeratedly small stance to attempt to reduce the strike zone. The

batter cannot and will not hit from that stance. The umpires are requested to use their judgment to determine a proper hitting strike zone for these batters, and to call the balls and strikes appropriately.

Pitching Line

The pitching line is the diagonal line between first and third base. Pitchers must start the pitch from at or behind the pitching line and may take only one step across the line when pitching. Only one step is permitted before delivery of the ball. Umpires are asked to enforce this rule, as it is dangerous for the pitcher to be too close to the batter; in the case of a line drive hit directly back at the pitcher, the pitcher will not have time to react and protect themselves from being hit.

Batting

Batting Order

All players present at the game must be in the batting order and take a turn at bat. A player may not play a position in the field unless they are in the batting order, and taking a regular turn at bat.

Three Strikes

The batter is out after three (3) strikes, even if the catcher drops the last strike.

Base on Balls:

The batter walks to first base after four (4) balls.

After a batter walks, they become a baserunner, and may advance past first base under normal risks.

Case: On the fourth ball, the catcher misplayed the ball and it rolls to the backstop. The batter-baserunner runs to first, and seeing the catcher has not gained control of the ball proceeds to second.

Ruling: This is ok. The ball is alive, and the walked batter may proceed past first base under normal risks. The catcher may attempt to throw him out at second.

Hit by a Pitch

The batter walks to first base if hit by a pitch **ONLY** if *the batter* tries to avoid being hit by the ball.

Fly Ball

The batter is out when any fly ball is caught in play. This includes the foul area but not the out-of-play area. Fly balls in the foul area must have gone higher than the batter's head. Runners may tag-up and advance on any caught fly ball at risk of being put out.

Foul Tip

The batter is out if a foul tip is caught on the third strike. (A foul tip is one in which the ball doesn't go higher than the batter's head but goes directly from the bat to the catcher's hand.) A caught foul tip is treated the same as a fly ball. Runners may tag-up and advance at risk of being put out.

Interference

The batter may not interfere with the throw to first by running to the left of the first base line. See [Interference](#) for penalties.

Base Running

Interference and Obstruction

Players not involved in a play are not allowed to obstruct a play (e.g. block a runner, hinder a fielder, or verbally mislead the other team).

On obstruction by a member of the defending team, base runners are awarded the base to which the umpire thinks they would have made it had the interference not occurred.

Obstruction is the act of :

A defensive player or team member which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball, or

A fielder who is:

- not in possession of the ball,
- not in the act of fielding a batted ball, or
- not about to receive a thrown ball

who impedes the progress of a runner who is running the bases.

Some examples of obstruction:

- the batter is obstructed or prevented from striking at a pitched ball.
- When any defensive player prevents the runner from making a base.

Case: The batter hits a ground ball to deep center field. As he rounds first base he is impeded by the first baseman, thus causing him to slow down. The player is subsequently put out at second base. What is the ruling?

Ruling: There is no question that obstruction occurred. It is the responsibility of the defensive player to ensure that they do not interfere with the batter-baserunner

in any case where there will not be a play at the base. Since there was not going to be a play at first base, it is up to the first baseman to ensure they do not impede the batter-baserunner's progress. When there is no throw to first base, the first baseperson must yield the white side of the base and the area required by the runner to make a turn toward second base. Failure to yield the white side of the base is obstruction. The question that remains is whether the interference caused the player to be put out at second base. If in the umpire's judgment the batter-baserunner would have made it safely to second base had the interference not occurred, then the batter-baserunner is safe at second. If in the umpire's judgment the batter-baserunner would not have made it safely to second base had the interference not occurred, then the batter-baserunner is out at second.

Case: The batter hits a ground ball to deep right field. As he rounds first base he is impeded by the first baseman, thus causing him to stop and remain at first base. Ruling: There is no question that obstruction occurred. It is the responsibility of the defensive player to ensure that they do not interfere with the batter-baserunner in any case where there will not be a play at the base. Since there was not going to be a play at first base, it is up to the first baseman to ensure they do not impede the batter-baserunner's progress. When there is no throw to first base, the first baseperson must yield the white side of the base and the area required by the runner to make a turn toward second base. Failure to yield the white side of the base is obstruction. The question that remains is where the runner would have ended up if the interference had not occurred. This is strictly an umpire's judgment call, the umpire should place the runner at whatever base the *umpire* believes the runner would have attained.

Case: The batter, attempts to swing at a pitched ball. The bat contacts the catcher's glove and misses the ball.

Ruling: The ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base. Other runners will only be advanced if forced by the batter going to first.

Case: The batter hits a ball into left field. As the batter is rounding 1st, she is forced to change path to avoid the first baseman. The runner makes it safely into second.

Ruling: Play continues like the obstruction never occurred.

Case: The batter hits a ball into left field. As the batter-baserunner is rounding 1st, the batter-baserunner is forced to change path to avoid the first baseman. The runner makes it safely to second but is put out attempting to go to 3rd.

Ruling: Since the obstruction occurred between 1st and 2nd, the runner is out, and the play will continue as if the obstruction never occurred.

Case: A player loudly makes a call before the umpire has made a decision in order to confuse or encourage the umpire to make a favorable call. This includes a base-coach signalling a "safe" call for their runners

Ruling: The lead runner is out and the player obstructing is ejected from the game.

On interference by a member of the team at bat, that *baserunner* is out. See [Intentional Collisions](#): for intentional collision penalties.

Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member which impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player while he is attempting to execute a play.

Some examples of interference:

- When a batter intentionally strikes a hit ball a second time, strikes it with a thrown, bat, or deflects its course in any way while running to first base.
- *When a batter leaves their bat in the play area in a way that impedes the catcher*
- *When a batter leaves their bat in the play area and the ball subsequently hits the bat.*
- *When a baserunner, batter or member of the offensive attempts to remove the bat from the playing area in a way that impedes the catcher*
- When a fair hit ball strikes a runner who is not on base.
- When the batter interferes with the catcher.

In all cases of interference the ball is dead (i.e. the play is over), the runner which caused the interference is out, and all other runners must return to the last base touched before the interference, unless forced to advance by the batter.

The umpires must use their discretion on all interference and obstruction calls.

Case: Runner at first. The batter hits a ground ball to second base. The second baseman picks up the ball and touches second base. The runner at first base, realizing they cannot go to second, stays at first base, thus interfering with the first baseman's ability to catch the attempted throw from second base. The batter-baserunner safely touches first base.

Ruling: The batter-baserunner is out because of the interference by the runner on first. Any time a player who is out interferes in a play on another runner, the runner whose outcome is affected by the interference is called out.

Case: The batter hits a ground ball which stops in front of home plate. As the batter is running to 1st he discards his bat in fair territory causing it to roll against the ball in fair territory.

Ruling: The ball is dead. The batter is out for batting the ball twice in fair territory.

Case: There is a runner on 2nd. The batter hits the ball toward the short stop, and the ball hits the runner who is half way to 3rd.

Ruling: The ball is dead, the runner is out, all other runners will return to the last base touched before the interference occurred unless forced by the batter becoming a base-runner.

Case: There is a runner on 2nd. The batter hits the ball toward 2nd, and the ball hits the runner who is standing on 2nd.

Ruling: The ball is alive and the play will continue. No interference has occurred.

Case: There is a runner at second with none out. The batter hits a ground ball toward the second baseman. The second baseman scoops up the batted ball and throws it to the third baseman who is covering 3rd base. The throw is in time and the 3rd baseman is holding the ball and waiting to apply the tag on the runner. The runner stays on his feet and deliberately crashes into the 3rd baseman hoping to dislodge the ball.
Ruling: The ball is dead, and the runner is out for interference. The batter base-runner remains on first base.

Case: There is a runner at 1st. Once the ball crosses home plate the runner attempts to steal 2nd. The batter steps across home plate in an attempt to interfere with the catcher's throw.
Ruling: The ball is dead. The batter is out. The runner returns to 1st.

Infield Fly Rule

The league uses the regular rule around infield fly calls. From the Softball Canada 2007 rulebook:

- a. Is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or a bunt):
 - 1) When first and second, or first, second and third base are occupied.
 - 2) That can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.
 - 3) Before two are out.
- b. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder that positions himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

NOTE:

1. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "INFIELD FLY, IF FAIR – THE BATTER IS OUT", for the benefit of the runners.
2. The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball.
3. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.
4. If a declared infield fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball.
5. If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly.

Fair and Foul Balls:

Any ball that passes the outfield foul marker in fair territory is a fair ball, even if it curves foul later.

A fly ball that lands in foul territory is foul.

A fly ball that lands in fair territory and rolls foul beyond first or third base is fair.

A fly ball that lands in fair territory and rolls foul inside first or third is foul.

A ground ball that stops in fair territory before passing first or third base is considered fair.

A ground ball that stops in foul territory before passing first or third base is foul.

A ground ball that passes *or touches* first or third base in fair territory and then rolls foul is a fair ball.

A ground ball that passes first or third base in foul territory and then rolls fair is a foul ball.

If a defending player touches the ball, the call is made where the ball was touched.

Advancing

Base runners may advance on any fair hit or infield error (except as outlined in [Stealing Home](#)). Base runners may advance on a caught fly ball, fair or foul, providing they tag up after the catch.

Ties at the Base

On ties at the base, the call goes to the runner.

Overrunning First Base

Runners may safely overrun first base. The runner is subject to a tag only if the *runner goes* to the left with the *intention* of taking second base. An accidental step left is allowed at the umpire's discretion, but if the runner continues to second, the runner incurs the normal risks of being tagged out.

Safety Base

A safety base is to be used at first base. The orange half of the bag is placed outside the baseline. The orange half of the bag is used only by the runner, and only when initially advancing to first. The batter must use the orange portion of the base on their first attempt at first base when the ball is hit to the infield. If the ball is hit out of the infield the runner is allowed to use the white portion of the base to round first or advance to second. Once the runner has obtained first base, he/she must use only the white half of the base. A base runner that leaves first with the intention of advancing to second, returns to first base, and is on the orange half of the bag, if tagged, is out. The defensive player must use only the white portion of the base.

Case: The batter hits the ball on the ground to the shortstop who scoops up the ball and throws it to first. The batter beats out the throw, but touches only the white portion of the bag.

Ruling: The runner has not touched the base. The runner must use the orange portion of the base on their first attempt at first base when there is a play made by the infield. The runner is called out on the play.

Case: The batter hits the ball on the ground to the shortstop who scoops up the ball and throws it to first. The ball beats the runner to first base, but the first baseman's foot is touching only the orange part of the base.

Ruling: The first *baseperson* has not touched the base. The defensive player must use only the white portion of the base on any play at first base. The runner is called safe.

Case: The batter hits the ball on the ground to center field. As the batter rounds first, he must stop to avoid colliding with the first *baseperson*.

Ruling: The first *baseperson* is guilty of obstruction, the play will continue, and when it completes the umpire shall award the runner whatever base he believes he would have advanced to had the obstruction not occurred. When there is no throw to first base, the first baseperson must yield the white side of the base and the area required by the runner to make a turn toward second base. Failure to yield the white side of the base is obstruction.

Overthrows

On overthrows in the in-play area, (except as outlined in [Stealing Home](#)), base runners may advance under normal risks.

If the defense throws the ball out of bounds, base runners may advance without risk, to the nearest base plus one. No further defensive play is possible. For example, 1) a base runner just rounding second is nearest to second, and advances to third; 2) a batter going to first advances to second if more than halfway to first, in the umpire's opinion.

Thrown balls that hit the sideline fences bounding the diamond are in play, unless they roll behind the fence or the backstop, in which case the ball is out of bounds.

Tagging Up

When a base runner is off the base and the pitcher regains possession of the ball within the pitcher's area, the baserunner must immediately proceed to the next base or return to the current base. If the runner stops with the intention of drawing a throw from the pitcher, the runner is out.

Leading Off

Base runners may not leave the base before the pitched ball crosses the plate, or bounces as a result of a short pitch. In such a case, the runner is out, the pitch is declared a "no pitch" and all other runners will return to the base they occupied before the pitch.

Hit by a Batted Ball

A runner struck by a batted ball while off base but in fair territory is automatically out. All runners must return to the base they occupied before the play, unless forced to advance by the batter becoming a baserunner.

Leaving the Base Line

A runner is out if they leave the base line by more than three (3) feet to avoid a tag.

Case: Runner on first base. The batter hits the ball on the ground to the second baseman, who fields the ball just behind the second base baseline. The player running to second base, runs behind the fielder so as not to interfere with the play, thus ending up about six feet off the baseline. Is the runner out for leaving the baseline?

Ruling: No. The runner did not run off of the baseline to avoid the tag, but rather to avoid interfering with the second baseman. A runner is only out if they leave the baseline by more than three feet to avoid being tagged by the fielder.

Case: Runner on third base. The batter hits the ball on the ground to the second baseman, who fields the ball just behind the second base baseline. The runner on third proceeds home so the second baseman throws the ball home. The catcher does not catch the ball cleanly and it rolls to the backstop along the Third base line. The catcher quickly picks up the ball, and attempts to tag the runner. The runner jumps out of the way to avoid tag and proceeds home.

Ruling: The runner is out for leaving the baseline to avoid a tag. Even though there is no clear baseline in this case, the runner's running line should be used as the guideline. If the runner deviates from that path by more than 3 feet to avoid a tag, they are out.

Two Runners on the Same Base

If two (2) runners occupy the same base at the end of a play, the trailing runner is out.

Stealing Home

Runners may not steal home, *and will be called out*, on a pitched ball misfielded by the catcher or an overthrow on the return throw from the catcher to the pitcher. Runners may steal home on other infield errors or when the catcher or other fielder throws to a base.

Case: Runners on first and third. Once the pitched ball crosses home plate, the runner on first base attempts to steal second. The catcher throws the ball to second and the runner on third steals home.

Ruling: This is ok. The runner on third base is permitted to attempt to steal home as soon as the catcher threw the ball to a base.

Case: Runners on first and third. Once the pitched ball crosses home plate, the runner on first base attempts to steal second. The catcher throws the ball back to the pitcher. The runner on third steals home.

Ruling: The runner stealing home is out. The runner on third base is only permitted to attempt to steal home when someone throws the ball to a base.

Case: Runners on first and third. Once the pitched ball crosses home plate, the runner on first base attempts to steal second. The catcher throws the ball back to the pitcher. The runner on third steals home. The pitcher throws the ball home attempting to get the runner out.

Ruling: The runner stealing home is out. The runner stealing third base is only permitted to attempt to steal home when someone throws a ball to a base. The pitcher only threw the ball home because of the illegal act of the baserunner. The ball is dead and all other runners must be returned to the base they occupied before the runner attempted to steal home.

Case: Runners on first and third. After the pitched ball crosses home plate the runner on first base leads off but does not steal. The ball is returned to the pitcher. The runner is slow returning to first. The pitcher throws the ball to first base to attempt to get the runner out before they can return to first base. The runner on third steals home.

Ruling: This is ok. The runner on third base is permitted to attempt to steal home as soon as the pitcher throws the ball to a base.

Case: Runners on first and third. The catcher returns the ball to the pitcher. The pitcher misses the ball and the ball rolls to second base. The runner on third steals home.

Ruling: The runner is out. The ball is dead and all other runners must return to the bases they occupied before the attempted steal. Umpires are asked to use their judgment in this case. If in the umpire's opinion the catcher did not intend to throw to a base, the runner is out.

Case: Runner on second. After the pitch crosses home the runner on second steals third, as the runner rounds third, the catcher still has not retrieved the ball, and so the runner steals home.

Ruling: The runner is out. The runner is not permitted to steal home on a pitched ball misfielded by the catcher, only on a throw to a base.

Case: Runner on second. After the pitch crosses home the runner on second steals third, the catcher throws the ball to third, the throw is misplayed by the third baseman, and the runner steals home.

Ruling: The runner is safe. The runner is permitted to attempt to steal home because of the throw to a base. If however the catcher had returned the ball to the pitcher, the runner would not have been permitted to steal home..

Base Line Priority

Runners have priority on the base line except when a defending player is fielding a BATTED ball. See [Interference](#) for penalties.

Intentional Collisions:

If a base runner intentionally collides with a defending player, the runner is out and must be thrown out of the game. No warnings need be issued.

If a defending player intentionally collides with a base runner, the fielder must be thrown out of the game. No warnings need be issued. The base runner is awarded bases as outlined in [Interference](#).

“Intentionally” is to be interpreted as; if the runner or fielder is aware of the potential for contact and in the umpires judgment the runner or fielder had the ability to avoid the contact, then a reasonable attempt must be made to avoid the collision. If no attempt is made to avoid the collision, then the collision should be ruled intentional. This rule is not intended to punish accidental or incidental contact of a minor nature. Minor contact is a fact of life in softball. This rule is intended to eliminate avoidable contact that could result in injury to one or both players involved.

When a player is ejected under this rule, the name of the offending player and his team must be reported to the softball league executive for further disciplinary action.

A team who accumulates three (3) such incidents will be suspended for the remainder of the season.

Case: Batter hits a ground ball to right field. The first baseman believing that there is the potential for a play at first base is standing on the outfield corner of the white part of first base. The fielder picks up the ball and throws it to first base, the batter-baserunner jostles the first baseman in an attempt to have him miss the throw.

Ruling: The batter-baserunner is out for interference. Although the contact was intentional, it is not serious enough to cause injury. Fielders should expect that they will be bumped, not crashed.

Case: Batter hits a ground ball to right field. The first baseman believing that there is the potential for a play at first base is standing on the outfield corner of

the white part of first base. The fielder misses the ball, and the batter-baserunner attempts to go to second but is obstructed with by the first baseman. Only incidental contact has occurred.

Ruling: Because no throw was made to first base, the first baseman is guilty of obstruction. The play continues, if the batter-baserunner does not in the umpires judgment achieve the base he would have achieved had the obstruction not occurred then she will be awarded that base at the end of the play. When there is no throw to first base, the first baseperson must yield the white side of the base and the area required by the runner to make a turn toward second base. Failure to yield the white side of the base is obstruction.

Case: Batter hits a ground ball to right field. The first baseman believing that there is the potential for a play at first base is standing on the outfield corner of the white part of first base. The fielder misses the ball, and the batter-baserunner attempts to go to second but is obstructed by the first baseman. In the process of rounding first base the batter-baserunner tries to hold his line and collides with the first baseman.

Ruling: Because no throw was made to first base, the first baseman is guilty of obstruction. However, since the batter-baserunner could have avoided contact, and made no reasonable attempt, the batter-baserunner is guilty of an intentional collision, and is removed from the game. A substitute will be permitted to take his legal place on base at the base awarded by the umpire as a result of the obstruction.

Commitment Line and Safe Line:

As soon as a base runner crosses the Commitment Line, that base runner is in a force play at home, and cannot end the play at third base. Crossing the commitment line is to be defined as any part of the runner's body completely crossing the commitment line. "Crossed" is defined as any part of the foot or body touching the ground on or across the commit line.

When the runner has crossed the Commitment Line, but has not yet crossed the safe Line, any defensive player only has to touch home plate, while in control of the ball, to put the runner out.

The base runner may cross the Safe Line anywhere along its length as long as an effort is made to avoid contact with defending players. When a runner touches ***the ground on or beyond the safe line*** prior to being legally tagged or prior to a defensive player legally holding the ball while in contact with home plate, the runner shall be declared safe. A runner will not be called out for stepping on home plate, provided there is no *potential* contact with a defensive player. A runner shall not be called out if home plate is touched in an attempt to avoid a collision. On the other hand, if the catcher is standing on home plate when the runner attempts to touch it, there is a risk of collision, so call the batter out.

The purpose of this rule is to reduce the probability of collisions at and around home plate. Collisions that occur at or around home plate may be reported by the umpire to the league executive as intentional collisions, if the umpire feels that the collision could have been avoided.

This rule does not prevent the defensive player from tagging the runner. If the defensive player tags the runner with the ball instead of touching home plate, the runner is still out.

Case: Runner on third. The batter hits a fly ball. By the time the ball is caught the runner has crossed the commitment line. The runner proceeds back to third, tags up and runs home.

Ruling: This is ok. The runner may cross the commit line in both directions as many times as he wishes. The point is once the runner has crossed the commit line she must finish the play at home base. Once the runner has crossed the commit line the first time, and until the runner has crossed the safe line, all the defensive team needs to do is touch home plate and the runner is out.

Case: Runner on third. The batter hits a fly ball. By the time the ball is caught the runner has crossed the commitment line. The runner proceeds back to third and stays there. The defensive team touches home plate.

Ruling: The runner is out. Once the runner crosses the commit line, and until he has crossed the safe line, all the defensive team needs to do is touch home plate and the runner is out.

Case: Runner on third. The batter hits a fly ball. By the time the ball is caught the runner has crossed the commitment line. The runner proceeds back to third and stays there. The defensive team does not notice and the game continues with another play.

Ruling: This is ok. It is up to the defensive team to tag home plate to get that runner out. Once the play continues with the next pitch it is too late to do anything.

Case: Runners on first and third. The batter hits a ground ball to the short stop. The short stop throws the ball to second base, so the runner on third proceeds home. The catcher is standing on home plate waiting for a throw. A throw does not come home, but the runner touches home plate, and in so doing makes physical contact with the catcher.

Ruling: The runner is out. The runner had no reason to touch home plate since the entire safe line was available to him. Umpires should not use their judgment on this play, if avoidable contact occurs the runner should be called out.

Case: Runners on first and third. The batter hits a ground ball to the short stop. The short stop throws the ball to second base, so the runner on third proceeds home. The catcher, seeing that no throw will be coming home

steps forward off of home plate. The runner touches home plate.

Ruling: The runner is safe. No contact occurred. This rule is intended only to prevent avoidable collisions at home plate. Since no contact occurred the runner is safe.

Case: Runner on third base. The batter hits the ball on the ground to the second baseman, who fields the ball just behind the second base baseline. The runner on third proceeds home so the second baseman throws the ball home. The catcher does not catch the ball cleanly and it rolls to the backstop along the Third base side. The catcher quickly picks up the ball, and attempts to tag the runner. The runner jumps out of the way to avoid the tag and proceeds home.

Ruling: The runner is out for leaving the baseline to avoid a tag. Even though there is no clear baseline in this case, the runner's running line should be used as the guideline. If the runner deviates from that path by more than 3 feet to avoid a tag, they are out.

Pinch Running Guidelines:

The substitute runner shall be the most recent batter of the same gender who is not on base. If no player meets this criterion then the most recent batter of the opposite gender who is not on base becomes the substitute.

A substitute runner will be permitted from home plate. The runner will line up on the first base side of home plate in contact with the backstop and even with the extension of the third base line to the backstop. When the ball is hit, the substitute runner will run for the batter.

Sliding

Sliding is permitted in all tiers.

Bunting

Bunting is permitted in all tiers.

Umpiring

Providing Umpires

Each team is responsible for providing umpires as per the umpires' schedule. Although there is no penalty for only providing one umpire, it is strongly recommended that two (2) umpires be provided, one for home plate and one for the bases.

If a team fails to provide umpires for four games, that team will be expelled from the league. See [Umpire No-Shows](#) for penalty points.

Equipment

Umpires are responsible for providing the umpire's mask.

Matching Score Sheets

It is the teams' responsibility to ensure that the score sheets from both teams match at the end of a game. It is recommended that the teams synchronize their scores at the end of each half inning. The umpires will decide any dispute on runs scored.

Knowledge of Game

Umpires must have a good general knowledge of the game, Softball Canada rules, and league rules.

Complaints

In the event of a complaint, umpires are responsible for gathering names and reporting the complaint to the softball league executive.

Enforcing Rules

The umpire controls the game and may consult the rulebook on decisions. Normal softball rules apply, unless superseded by Nortel Networks Mixed Softball League Rules. Appeals of the umpire's interpretation of the rules may be made to the league executive, and must be noted with the umpire at the time of the incident. The umpire's judgment decisions cannot be appealed. Verbal and/or physical abuse of the umpire is prohibited and will result in immediate ejection from the game.

To further clarify, players shall not coach the umpires. This includes trying to explain the rules to the umpire, loudly making calls before the umpire has made a decision, or a base-coach signaling a "safe" call for their runners. The last 2 are interference - see above.

Appeals Process

The umpires' judgment is not open to appeal.

Other appeals will be accepted in the following manner only:

- A representative of the appealing team must send a single email to softball@nortelnetworks.com before the team's next game.
- League Executive will solicit any further information by email or phone. Unsolicited email or phone calls are discouraged, and will not be included in the final finding.
- The League Executive will make a decision within 2 weeks of receipt of the appeal.

Scoring

Mercy Rule

A team may score a maximum of ten (10) runs in a single inning (except as outlined in [Minimum Number of Same Sex](#)). This rule applies in all innings of the game, including the last inning.

Score Sheets

Game score sheets must be filled in at game time, and at the end of the game, must be signed by both team captains and the umpires. The captain of the winning team is responsible for submitting game results. For instructions on how to submit game scores, see the softball web page (<http://otttechsoftball.org>) under "Administration".

Note: game sheets are not submitted, but are required in the event of a dispute. Captains must retain all game sheets until the end of the season.

Runs scored in the bottom half of the last inning count only if the game is tied, or the home team is behind when they come to bat. Runs scored in the bottom half of the last inning count only until the home team's score exceeds that of the visiting team by one run (subject to [Mercy Rule](#)).

Points

Two (2) points are awarded to a team for a win; one (1) point is awarded for a tie and zero (0) points are awarded for a loss or forfeit.

Umpire No-Shows

Penalty points are assigned when a team misses an umpiring assignment. The team is assessed -1 points for the first no-show, -3 points for the second no-show, and -6 points for the third no-show. (See [Providing Umpires](#) .) A team with 4 missed umpiring assignments will be suspended for the remainder of the season and further disciplinary action may be applied against the next season. The captains of a suspended team are responsible for ensuring that all subsequent umpiring assignments are fulfilled and may face subsequent disciplinary action for failure to do so.

Default Game Scores

Games decided by forfeit of one team shall have the score recorded as 7 to 0 for the winning team.

If both teams forfeit a game, the score will be 0-0 and no points will be awarded.

