

Benson's ESS Sunday League

Rules – Coed – 2022

** Any rule not specifically addressed in this document will default to ASA/USA Softball rules interpretation **

** Rules apply to all divisions unless otherwise noted **

***NEW RULE – ALL catchers need to squat/kneel (Umpires can't call balls/strikes if a catcher is not squatting).

Lineups – 7 & 3 Division

- Batting order must alternate sexes from the start until one sex is exhausted.
- can start Male / Female or Female / Male
- Teams must have at least 9 players physically in the game to continue playing.
- Teams can bat as many as 12 players when using both Male and Female EHs.
- Teams can play as many as 13 players if also using a DH with both Male and Female EHs.
- Teams must play with at least 3 Females in the field ... but can have as many as 10.
- If you start with only 2 Females, you must take an automatic out in the place in the batting order for the 3rd Female. If a 3rd Female arrives later, she can go into that spot in the order.
- You can start with 9 players ... 3 Female / 6 Male without penalty and play the rest of the game with 9.
- if you expect a 7th Male to arrive later, you must take an automatic out for him in the lineup, and then he can go into that spot in the order. If you don't take the automatic out, you must play with 9 for the remainder of the game and that 7th Male can only play as a substitute.

- EH (Extra-Hitters)

- Teams can have up to 2 EHs ... 1 Male and 1 Female
- Teams can use just 1 EH, either Male or Female, without restriction
- The EH can alternate in the field with one position player, as long as batting order remains same.

- DH (Designated-Hitter)

- Teams can have 1 DH if they choose to hit for a defensive player.
- DH can be Male or Female but must be same sex as defensive player.
- At any point in the game, the DH or defensive player can assume both roles and the other player can no longer participate in the game.
- You cannot start with only 9 players in the field and have an EH and/or DH ... they can only be used once you have a lineup with 10 fielders.
- Any player injured during the game with no same sex substitute available will be an automatic out in the batting order. This can occur multiple times as long as at least 9 players physically remain in game.

- Allowable lineup combinations (most common):
- 9 Players: 7 / 2 F (must take auto out in 3rd F spot); 6 M / 3 F (no out)
- 10 Players: 6 M / 4 F; 5 M / 5 F
- 11 Players: 7 M / 4 F (with F EH); 8 M / 3 F (with M EH)
- 12 Players: 8 M / 4 F (with M and F EHs)
- There is no mention of DH here, as the DH and DEFO are same sex and count as 1 in the lineup.
- This also does not provide details for the many other combinations using 4 or more Females.

HIT IT AND SIT RULE – After a HR is hit over the fence, the batter has to only touch 1B and can go back to the dugout. All runners whom were on base may simply go back to the dugout.

Courtesy Runners

- Teams may use a courtesy runner for any player injured prior to or during the game.
- We allow a courtesy runner for 1 Male and 1 Female.
- Courtesy runners must be the last batted out of the same sex.
- If the last batted out is batting or on-deck, you use the batter of the same sex who is farthest away.
- If a team is already using a courtesy runner for one sex and an injury occurs to another player of the same sex, the team may be allowed to have another courtesy runner **if the other team agrees to it.**

Pitching

- Pitcher may be Male or Female.
- Pitcher must start with **ONE** foot on the rubber and ball at a stopped position.
- Pitching arm must go straight back and straight forward to be considered legal.
- Flat pitching and hi-arc pitching are not allowed.
- Pitches must have an arc that at least reaches a batters head and goes no more than 2 feet over.
- For most Females this means 5-7 foot arc.
- For most Males this means 6-8 foot arc.
- Any pitch that does not meet the arc restrictions **will not be called a strike.**
- If a pitcher continues to throw flat or hi-arc pitches, the umpire will warn them ... if it continues, the umpire can remove the pitcher from that position (they are allowed to remain in the game at another position).(IF called illegal 3 times in a game – will be removed from P)
- Any pitcher that has been removed from 2 games may be suspended for 1 game.
- The normal strike zone whose vertical planes adjust and are determined by the batter (front knee / back shoulder), and then transferred to the area directly above the plate.
- If the pitch does not completely go above the batter's head at some point after release – **IT IS A BALL.**
- Intentional walks are not allowed.
- Only applies to a Male batter followed by a Female batter.
- If the pitcher throws 4 consecutive balls during an at-bat, an intentional walk will be called.
- The batter will be awarded second base(THEY GO DIRECTLY TO 2B).

- The Female batter then has the **option** of taking first base or hitting.
- This is not an umpire's judgment call ... it is automatic based on the count.
- If the batting team has to take an automatic out for a Female who is not present and if there are 2 outs, then That Female's spot will be skipped and the next Male batter will be allowed to hit without penalty.

4 Foul Rule

- Once a batter has gotten to the point where they have 2 strikes, if they hit 4 foul balls at ANY time after that, they will be ruled out.
- If the 4th foul ball is a pop-up or fly ball that is caught, the play remains live and any runners can still tag up and try to advance.

Fake Tags

- Fake tags **are not allowed**.
 - If a player is deemed to have done this, that team will be given a warning.*
 - A second occurrence by that team will result in the ejection of the offending player.
- *If Umpire gives the warning during the pregame meeting, player does not get a warning, they are ejected immediately.

Sliding

- Sliding is recommended when going into 2B, 3B or home plate on a close play.
- On a play at 2B, 3B or home plate, the runner must either slide or avoid contact of any kind.
- Failure to slide or avoid contact will result in the runner being called out.
- Any contact deemed malicious by the umpire will result in the runner being ejected.
- The defensive player covering the base /plate without possession of the ball **must allow the runner an open path to the base / plate**.
- The defensive player covering the base /plate with possession of the ball waiting to make a tag on the runner does not have to step out of the way of the runner.
- Incidental contact may occur without penalty when the throw takes the defensive player into the path of the runner, but the defensive player cannot otherwise impede the progress of the runner while trying to gain possession of the ball.

Protests

- All protests must be made official to the umpire immediately after the play in question.
- The umpire will record the exact situation of the game and contact league officials.
- Protests will be decided as soon as possible.
- Both teams must make a note in their books in case the game must be resumed at a later date.
- Have the umpire sign your scorebook to reflect this.

Bunting / Stealing / Leading

- Bunting is not allowed.
- Stealing is not allowed.
- Leading off a base is not allowed.

- If a base runner leaves the base prior to the batter hitting the ball, they can be called out.

Field Dimensions

- The bases are set at 60 feet from home plate (back point of plate to back side of base).
- The pitching rubber is set at 46 feet from home plate (back point of plate to front edge of rubber).
- The out of bounds line goes straight out from the edge of the backstop.
- All throws into the dead ball area will result in a 2 base award.

Player Re-Entry / Substitutes

- Substitutes must be same sex.
- Any player (starter or sub) can re-enter the game 1 time.
- This includes the Pitcher.
- Player must return to the same spot in the batting order.

Run Rules

- 20 runs after 4 innings (3.5 innings if home team is ahead).
- 15 runs after 5 innings (4.5 innings if home team is ahead).
- 12 runs after 6 innings (5.5 innings if home team is ahead) .

Bats

- All bats must meet ASA/USA Softball and Lynn's/Benson's Umpires approval.
- Teams should have all bats out for the umpire to inspect prior to the game.
- Any player found using an illegal / non-approved bat will be subject to all associated penalties including ejection. If it has a 2000/2004 ASA stamp (only), umpire will then check to see that it is not on the exception list (typically an Easton Stealth or Synergy model which is no longer allowed). This list has not changed in years.

Equipment

- Catchers must wear facemasks ... all other equipment is optional.
- Metal spike **are not allowed**.
- If player is caught wearing metal spike during a game, **they will be ejected**.

Grace Period

- Teams will be given a **10 minute** grace period to get the required minimum number of players to start a game.
- After 10 minutes, the game will be declared a forfeit.
- This only applies to "early" games ... 6:00 / 6:15 / 6:30.
- This does not apply to "late" games ... 7:00 or later ... these games **have no grace period**.

Warm Ups

- Pitchers are allowed 5 warm up pitches in the first inning ... 3 each inning after that.
- Infield / Outfield can take warm ups between innings for the first 3 innings, none after.

Time Limits

- Time limits will be imposed on all games that are part of a triple-header.
- No new innings will be allowed to start after 80 minutes.
- The clock starts at the scheduled game time.
- If a grace period was used for the 6:00 game, the time limit clock still starts at 6:00.
- If a game is tied after completion of the inning when the time limit goes into effect, the game will be considered suspended and will be resumed at a later date.

5th Infielder Rule

- No outfielder is allowed to play in the infield at any time.
- An outfielder cannot cover a base or make a tag ... if they do, the runners will all be called safe.
- An outfielder can make a catch in the infield, provided their starting position was in the outfield.
- In the event of a rundown "PICKLE", all players, including outfielders can become involved and make plays.

Post Game Cleanup

- You must take your trash out of the fields.
- We'd rather ALL TEAMS CARRY IN, CARRY OUT – and NOT use provided garbage cans to clean up your area after the game.
- We risk losing permits if this procedure is not followed.

Alcohol Policy

- Some of the fields that we use do not allow alcohol anywhere on their grounds.
- The status of each field is listed on the Ground Rules document that is on the league website.
- Players who are caught violating this policy will face penalties, including termination from the league.
- BE SMART, DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE!

Sportsmanship

- This is an adult league and we expect you all to act like it at all times.
- During games, it is the responsibility of the manager to deal with umpires regarding calls.
- Any abuse of the umpire or constant complaining about calls will result in an ejection of the player.
- Any player conduct that is found to be detrimental to the league can result in a player being banned.
- Do not throw bats or any other equipment ... this will result in an ejection of the player.

Ejections

- If a player is ejected, they are suspended for that team's next game, including playoffs.
- If a player is ejected during a game and that team does not have an eligible substitute, the game will result in a forfeit. You cannot drop down 1 in the batting order for an ejection.

- The substitute must be same sex, and can be someone involved in starter / substitute relationship with the ejected player.
- The only other special situation is in the case of a DH and the player they are batting for. If either of those players is ejected, the other can just assume both roles and play goes on.

Rosters

- Rosters consist of 25 players.
- Initial rosters are due before your first game.
- Teams can add players to fill out the final roster spots until midnight on 7/1.
- Please provide full first and last names of all players.
- Once on a roster, players can be removed and replaced.
- We advise not adding any additional players until such time as you need to use them.
- Use of any player not on your roster will result in forfeiture of any games they played in.

Lineup Cards

- We track player participation using lineup cards that are handed in to the umpire.
- Please fill out the card properly ... with team name, date, and all players first and last names
- If you have anyone at the game who is trying to get attendance credit, write them down as a sub and point them out to the umpire so that they can make a note on the card. If there is no notation from the umpire on the card, the player will not get credit.
- When making substitutions, make sure that the umpire records them properly on the card.
- The cards are the law, if you fail to do things properly, you may not get credit for players.
- Managers will be required to inform the umpire and the other team of any changes or substitutions just so everyone is on the same page.

Playoff Eligibility

- Players must receive credit for 6 games to be eligible for playoffs.
- Credit can be earned in one of two ways:
- Play in the game for at least 1 pitch ... at-bat or in the field
- Be at the game from first pitch to last pitch and have the umpire make a note on the lineup card that they verify that you were in fact there for the entire game.

Win & Move Up

- We will be implementing this system to try and create parity and fair competition.
- The teams that finish first in the regular season and the division champion will be required to move up to the next level division. If it is the same team, then only 1 team is required to move up.

League Discretion

- Any other matters that come up, that were not specifically addressed in this document will be handled solely at the league's discretion.