



PARLIAMENT HILL SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES RATIFIED ON 7 MAY 2009

SECTION 1: SCORING, FIELDING AND BATTING

- 1.1 The **home team** shall ensure that three bases are available for the game. The home team shall also provide a new softball at the start of the game.
- 1.2 At all times, and in particular, for the purposes of making game decisions, **team captains** or in their absence, the assistant captain or designate shall retain complete authority over their team, including discussion with the umpire or the opposing team captain, batting order or fielding positions.
- 1.3 The games shall be **seven (7) innings** long. There is a **seven-run (7) maximum per inning** in effect, (i.e. if a team scores seven runs in an inning, that team shall leave the field as if the seventh run was the third out). This does not apply to the **last inning** where there is **no maximum-run** rule in effect.
- 1.4 There is a maximum of **one (1) recorded home run** per inning allowed. All subsequent home runs will be deemed a double and base runners will be permitted to advance two (2) bases from their starting position. This rule only applies to diamonds with a fenced in outfield. Open fields or in the park home runs do not count as the recorded home run.
- 1.5 During the regular season, each team must field a **minimum of seven (7) players** at all times or shall lose by default. Fielding positions **must always include a pitcher**, but are otherwise at the discretion of the team. In circumstances where a team can **only** field 7 players, the team may request the use of a dead catcher. The dead catcher cannot field a ball. The sole purpose is to throw the ball back to the pitcher. When a team only has 7 players present, the catcher can be a person from the opposing team. Alternatively, if a team has extra players that cannot be fielded for lack of female players, the catcher can be an extra male player of the same team.
- 1.6 In order to field a full compliment of ten (10) players on defence, teams **must field at least three (3) women**. Teams may field as many women as they wish on defence, however, if at any time a team fields **fewer than three (3) women** on defence, one position for each absent female player on the playing field shall remain unoccupied.
- 1.7 A team with **no female players** on defence or in the batting order shall be immediately disqualified and shall lose by default even if the situation occurs during a game.
- 1.8 A team's batting order shall have **no more than 4 consecutive male batters**, this also includes when the bottom and top of the order meet. If a team's batting order starts with 4 male players, the last person in the batting order must be female. In the event that a team has too many male players and not enough female players, female players must be rotated into the batting order a second time.
- 1.9 If a team is **missing 1 or 2 female players in the batting order**, for any portion of an inning, each missing female player shall be inserted into the batting and named Automatic-out. Each time the absent or automatic out player is up to bat, this shall be automatically registered as an out. The batting order shall be maintained in the same fashion as if there were female players available with no more than 4 consecutive male batters. For example, if a team is missing 2 female players and has 10 male players in attendance, the batting order would be:

M1, M2, M3, M4, F1, M5, M6, M7, M8, F2=AutoOut1, M9, M10, F3=AutoOut2

- 1.10 Games in which the *score is tied after seven* innings may continue for one additional inning if both captains agree. But, if two PHSL games are scheduled back-to-back on the same diamond, the *first game must end 15 minutes after the scheduled start time of the second game*. Games must also end when light fails, or in the event of extreme weather (see section 6). In games that must end before an inning is complete, the *final score is deemed to be the score at the end of the last completed inning*.
- 1.11 If a playing decision must be made at any point during the game, both team captains must agree to all decisions regarding the continuation of play or a reduction in innings played at the beginning of an inning. Consultations after either team has begun the inning will not be permitted and are to be revisited at the beginning of the next inning.

SECTION 2: PITCHING RULES

- 2.1 *Pitchers* are advised to keep the speed of their pitches down at all times with an ideal speed being that required to deliver the ball to the plate with a *noticeable lob* trajectory. Contrary to slo-pitch, there is no minimum lob trajectory but a *maximum trajectory of eight (8) feet* applies.
- 2.2 *Pitching* shall be conventional underhand. No windmill or other wind-up, whip action shall be allowed. The *batter may request the umpire* to direct the pitcher to adjust the speed of the ball. The pitcher shall take position within the confines of the pitching zone. One of the pitcher's feet must be in contact with the pitching rubber when the pitch prepares to release the pitch.
- 2.3 The pitcher may hold or grip the ball in any manner before delivery. The pitcher may release the ball in any manner when delivering the pitch, i.e. pitcher is permitted to put a spin on the ball.

SECTION 3: SPECIAL RULES

- 3.1 Except as they may be modified by these rules, the *regular rules of softball* will apply to the games of the PHSL.
- 3.2 *Base stealing is not allowed*. Base runners may not leave their base until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. The ball is dead if the pitch crosses the plate without contact from the batter and until a new pitch leaves the pitcher's hand. If a base runner leaves the base before the ball has left the pitcher's hand, the umpire shall call time and the play is dead. All runners return to their starting positions and no ball, strike or hit is incurred.
- 3.3 *Sliding to a base is not allowed*. This includes sliding headfirst or feet-first. A runner is only permitted to slide when *returning* to a base on a popup to avoid a double out. The base person is not permitted to intentionally obstruct the base runner.
- 3.4 On a *throwing error* to a base where the ball remains in the field of play, including foul territory within the fencing of the field, the *play shall continue without interruption*. However, if as a result of a throwing error the *ball goes out of play*, the play will be ruled dead by the umpire and *all base runners will automatically advance one base* past the base they were on, or that they were running towards, when the ball goes out of play.

- 3.5 A ground ball which is hit safely out of reach of any defensive player and which rolls under a fence or onto a road surface, shall be ruled a **ground-rule double** by the acting-umpire. The batter and any base runners shall be permitted to advance 2 bases from their original starting position.
- 3.6 **No base runner may touch home plate** while attempting to score. Rather, the acting-umpire shall draw, at the beginning of the game and as may be necessary throughout the game, a line extending from the first base and right foul line continuing behind the plate. The base runner must cross this line, and at two paces behind the plate, before an opposing player touches the plate while controlling the ball, in order to score. The base runner shall automatically be called out if there is any contact between the catcher and the base runner, unless such contact results in the catcher's movement in attempting to control the ball or to touch the plate for the out. In addition, there shall be a **commitment line**, located 1/3 of the distance from home plate to third base. Once a base runner crosses this line, the runner may not return to third base. If the runner crosses this line and returns to third base then the runner will be called out. Under no circumstance is the catcher (or any other player) permitted to tag a base runner out during a play at home plate.
- 3.7 Where a player is **unable to run** due to injury, a replacement or **designated runner**, may run for that player. The replacement runner must be of the same gender and the last recorded out. If the last recorded out is too close in the batting order to be the designated runner, another player of the same gender can be selected. The replacement runner shall stand parallel to home plate, at a similar distance from first base and several paces away from the hitter and shall replace the hitter as base runner as soon as contact is made with the ball. Any replacement runner starting from too far in front of the plate or leaving before contact is made shall be declared out by the acting-umpire.
- 3.8 An **infield-fly** is a fairly batted fly ball (not a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when first and second, or when first, second and third bases are occupied with less than two out. When the batter hits a **fair fly ball** the umpire must call: "**Infield Fly, if fair, batter is out**". The batter is **automatically out and the play is dead**, whether the ball is caught or not. Base runners shall remain on, or freely return to, their original base. This is to avoid an infield player from purposefully missing to engage a double play.
- 3.9 **Bunting is not allowed.** No player is allowed to "square up" for a bunt or otherwise intentionally deaden the ball.
- 3.10 **No violent behaviour** of any type shall be tolerated. Any player intentionally pushing, shoving, hitting or otherwise engaging in **non-sportsperson like conduct** shall be thrown out of the game by the acting-umpire and may be subjected to suspension by the League Commissioner. If the team captain of the player in question refuses to eject a violent player, the opposing team's captain shall immediately notify the League Commissioner who will determine the penalty to be imposed on the player and possibly, the team.
- 3.11 **Metal cleats are not allowed.** Players are permitted to wear **rubber cleats**. A player found to be wearing metal cleats will be permitted to change into acceptable footwear in order to continue playing. If this is not possible, the player will be removed from the batting order and not permitted to play a position in the field for the remainder of the game.
- 3.12 **Catcher's masks are mandatory.** The pitcher cannot put the ball in play unless the catcher is wearing a mask. If a team refuses to use a catcher's mask, the team is deemed to be in violation of league rules and shall **automatically lose by default**. The incident shall be reported to the

League Commissioner and further sanctions may be imposed should the team continue to refuse to comply with this rule.

- 3.13 The consumption of alcoholic beverages is *prohibited* on any of the City of Ottawa facilities.

SECTION 4: ACTING-UMPIRES

- 4.1 The team at bat shall provide an *acting-umpire* that is reasonably familiar with the rules of the game. The strike zone is always relative to the batter and the acting-umpire shall call as a strike any pitch that crosses over the plate at a height no lower than the batter's knees and no higher than the batter's shoulders. Both teams have a duty to support the decisions of the acting-umpire.
- 4.2 It shall be the explicit responsibility of each captain to ensure that his or her players respect and abide by the decisions of acting-umpires. The acting-umpire shall decide all matters related to the play on the field and shall not be subjected to censure from either team. Only captains or, in their absence, the assistant captain may seek an explanation of any call from the acting-umpire. Any player voicing criticism of the acting-umpire shall be subject to a warning and may be thrown out of the game by the acting-umpire if he or she continues.
- 4.3 During the season, the team at-bat may provide base coaches as *field acting-umpires*, standing inside of the right and left field lines, to have authority over calls at first, second or third base. This rule is mandatory during the playoffs. At any time where field acting-umpires are available, the home plate acting-umpire may consult with the field acting-umpire in making any decision or call.

SECTION 5: GAME DELAYS OR CANCELLATIONS

- 5.1 A game cancelled due to rain or a rainout may be declared by the team captains, by unanimous agreement, such agreement not to be unreasonably withheld, to cancel the game due to weather conditions. Such agreement must be reached no later than 3 p.m. for the early games and 5 p.m. for the late games on the day of the scheduled game. If the Commissioner has not cancelled all league games and there is no unanimous agreement between the captains as to the severity of the weather conditions, the game shall be played.
- 5.2 A game may be suspended while in progress due to *heavy rain* with the agreement of both captains. In the absence of a unanimous agreement, the captains should contact the League Commissioner to resolve any disagreement. If the fourth inning has been completed and the game is not resumed within 30-minutes, the score after four innings shall stand as the final score. If the fourth inning has not been completed, the game shall be replayed in its entirety, at a time and place to be determined by the Commissioner.
- 5.3 A game is automatically stopped or cancelled in the case of *thunder or lightning*.
- 5.4 The captains, acting unanimously, may apply to the Commissioner to reschedule any game, for whatever reason, provided that such application is made at least one week in advance of the desired game date.