

2026 Final Rules

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This is a church-based co-ed softball league with the mission to gather both believers and non-believers together for fun and recreation. If there is a conflict, fault on the side of grace. Remember Jesus is above all of us, and we are representatives of His at these games. Be mindful of your words and your attitudes. Winning isn't always the highest objective.

League President
Pastor Todd Wielgos

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1. OPERATIONS

1.1. Weather

- 1.1.1. If all the games scheduled for Monday are rained out, that week's scheduled games will be played at the end of the season. For example, if the Week 2 scheduled games are rained out, the Week 2 games will be played the Monday following the Week 10 scheduled games.
- 1.1.2. **If a weather stop is ordered, ALL play is canceled for that evening at the umpires' discretion or rain delay.**

1.2. Incomplete Games

- 1.2.1. Games with four complete innings that are called by weather will be logged as an official game. The final score is the last full inning played.
- 1.2.2. Games with less than four complete innings will be made up. Play will resume with the batter in the box, any runners on base, and the number of outs when the game was called.
- 1.2.3. **A game called on account of darkness under twilight rules is to be completed at a date and time TBD by both managers unless BOTH managers mutually agree to log the game as an official game.**

1.3. Game Times

All 6:30 games are expected to begin play by 6:40 or result in an automatic forfeiture. The 7:30 and 8:30 games are expected to start play no later than 10 minutes after the conclusion of the previous game or result in an automatic forfeiture.

2. EQUIPMENT

2.1. Game Balls

All teams will use an optic yellow leather softball with a .52 cor and a 275/300 compression provided by the league.

2.2. Bats

2.2.1. Men aged 54 and younger may use ANY kind of full wood bat for baseball or softball.

2.2.1.1. Any partial wood bat that has non-wood composition in the barrel or the handle is not legal for male batters aged 54 and younger.

2.2.1.2. Any male player 54 or younger using a non-wood bat or a partial non-wood bat after the first pitch has been thrown shall be called out, and no runners may advance in the event of a hit. No exceptions are to be granted.

2.2.2. A male batter aged 55 or over may use any bat of any composition. The senior male batter must have had their 55th birthday on or before the day of the game; no exceptions are to be granted.

2.2.3. Female batters may use any bat of any composition.

2.3. Bases

All 1st bases will be the double-wide orange and white safety bases.

2.4. Shoes

Softball or baseball shoes with non-metal cleats are recommended. No metal cleats are allowed.

3. PLAYERS ELIGIBILITY

3.1. Age limit is 17 years old.

3.2. Special waiver for 16-year-olds at the discretion of the manager and with league approval by the league President. A player turning 16 at any time during the regular season is eligible for waiver.

3.3. Minors (17 and under) may NOT sign the roster form. Instead, page 5 must be signed by parent or legal guardian.

3.4. If you are 55 years of age or older at the time of sign-up and did not play in our league in 2024, you MUST produce a sports physical with Dr. Authorization to play ball in 2026.

3.5. Tournament Eligibility

3.5.1. To be eligible for tournament play, a player must have played 3 games in the regular season.

4. PLAYER CONDUCT

- 4.1. All managers and players are expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary fashion at all times before, during, and after the game(s). We are here to set an example. A great man once said, preach the gospel at all times and use words if necessary.
- 4.2. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall be defined as being: Any negative comment directed at the opposing team or individual(s) or umpire(s) or fan(s), any player using foul language, aggressive contact on the base paths, threatening another player, or anything the umpire deems as being unsportsmanlike.
- 4.3. Misconduct as listed above will HALT play immediately and trigger an unsportsmanlike conduct time-out by the umpire(s). At the umpire's discretion may issue a warning (preferably) or eject the offending person(s).
- 4.4. Repeated or severe (i.e. fighting) unsportsmanlike conduct could result in player suspension or being banned from the league.
- 4.5. All players MUST sign the code of conduct form before they are eligible to play. All players MUST have their name formally submitted via the roster submission form that will be signed by the head clergy as well as the team manager.

5. INJURY PROTOCOL

The Injury Protocol is mandatory and must be followed for every serious injury when a player is injured, regardless of the reason.

5.1. Game Stops

- 5.2. Both teams should retreat to their dugouts except for managers, umps, family, and any medically trained personnel willing to assist.

If the injury is serious, players are encouraged to form a prayer circle and pray for the injured/incapacitated player.

5.3. Evaluate the injured player. 5.3.1.

MANDATORY 9-1-1

There is no charge for the Paramedics' arrival and evaluation.
There is a charge to the patient for transport to the hospital.

5.3.1.1. Serious contact with ground, fence, light pole, another player, etc.

5.3.1.2. Any player, coach, or fan losing consciousness.

5.3.1.3. Chest pains, unable to catch breath, etc.

5.3.1.4. Bones protruding from skin.

5.3.1.5. Any other deemed serious by coaches, umpires or league officials.

- 5.3.1.6. For a cardiac incident, begin CPR immediately while someone calls 9-1-1.
- 5.3.1.7. For a possible stroke, call 9-1-1. Then perform the FAST assessment;

FACE: Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

ARMS: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

SPEECH: Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is their speech slurred or strange?

TIME: If you observe any of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately.

In the event no one on either team knows CPR, check other teams at other fields.

For a non-cardiac/respiratory issue, call 9-1-1.
This could include diabetic shock, seizure, etc.

5.3.2. NON-MANDATORY 9-1-1

- 5.3.2.1. If majority rules that injury is serious, but player does not want Paramedics, try to talk them into just getting looked at at an Urgent Care facility or ER.
- 5.3.2.2. If no family is present in the stands, provide a player to take them to an Urgent Care facility or ER, or if the player wishes to call a family member to pick them up and bring them in to get checked.
- 5.3.3. In ANY case of a player being transported to the hospital. Do NOT LEAVE THE injured player alone at the hospital until a friend or family member of the player arrives to relieve you.
- 5.3.4. Contact League President, Todd Wielgos at 847-254-4431 or Doug Peterson at 815-382-1880 to report injury within 24 hours.

5.4. Resume game at Umpire/Managers discretion, i.e.

- 5.4.1. When player turns out to be fine, whether they re-enter the game or not.
- 5.4.2. When another player or injured player's family/friend has agreed to drive them to Emergency Clinic/Department.
- 5.4.3. When Paramedics have taken over the situation.

6. FIELDS

North Fields (Township and Shamrock)

6.1. Set-Up

The home team is responsible for setting up the fields

6.1.1. Pitching Rubber

50 feet, measured from the rear point of home plate to the front edge of the pitching rubber. Securely fasten to the infield dirt.

6.1.2. Bases

6.1.2.1. First and Third

60 feet measured from the pointy rear part of home plate to the in-ground base receptacles for 1st and 3rd base.

6.1.2.2. Second

85 feet from the pointy part of home plate to the in-ground base receptacles for 2nd base. The distance from 2nd to 3rd is 60 ft.

6.1.2.3. Strike Mat

36 inches from the back of the mat to the two forward points. Width is 18 inches.

6.2. Tear Down

The visiting team playing the last scheduled game in the North Conference is responsible for the tear down of the fields.

6.2.1. Remove bases, pitching rubber, and strike mat and return to shed.

6.2.2. Replace all base plugs.

6.2.3. Clean up any trash in and around the field.

6.2.4. Any items left, place in the white lost and found bin behind Field 1.

6.2.5. Turn lights off

6.2.6. Lock shed by pressing the enter key.

South Fields (Lion's Park)

Field setup/tear-down at Lions Park in Cary will be handled by Cary Parks.

7. GAMES

7.1. Players

7.1.1. Teams shall exchange line-ups before the first pitch either before or immediately after the home plate prayer.

- 7.1.2. A game may be played with a minimum of 8 fielders, even for a full game.
- 7.1.3. A MAXIMUM of TEN players may take the field if at least one fielder is female.
- 7.1.4. A MAXIMUM of NINE players may take the field if there isn't a female fielder.

7.2. Time Limits

Enforced by Umpires

- 7.2.1. No NEW inning will start after 60 minutes.
- 7.2.2. Games will immediately stop at 70 minutes elapsed.
 - 7.2.2.1. If both teams don't complete their half of the inning, the final score will revert to the last complete inning.

7.3. ~~Speed Up Rules~~

~~Slaughter and Firecracker rule does not apply in playoff championship games.~~

7.4. Slaughter Rule

A team losing by 13 runs at the end of the 4th, 5th, or 6th inning loses the game by slaughter.

7.5. Circuit Breaker High Score (Firecracker)

The team to reach 20 runs or 1 run higher over 20 runs than the other team wins the game at the bottom of the 4th, 5th, or 6th innings.

Example 1: Home is winning 19-18 at the bottom of the 4th. Home team scores a run, and the game is over when the 20th run crosses home plate.

Example 2: At the top of the 5th inning, Visitor is winning 18-15. Visitor scores 2 runs at the top of the 5th inning to get to 20 runs, but the home team scores 6 runs to have 21 runs; the home team wins, even though the visitor team got to 20 runs first.

Example 3: Home is winning 19-18 at the bottom of the 6th; at the top of 7th, visitors score 2 runs and take the lead 21-18. HOME team gets last at-bats in 7th to try and tie or win game. If they tie, game continues until winner emerges with highest run count.

7.6. Two and Two Count

- 7.6.1. North Conference

A mandatory 2 and 2 count will now be in force at the top of the 5th inning for every game without exception. A waiver may be obtained if there are no games behind you and at the consent of BOTH managers. Managers are advised to canvass their players BEFORE giving consent.

7.6.2. South Conference

A mandatory 2 and 2 starts at top of 5th OR 7:15 for 6:30 games. 45 minutes into the 7:30 or 8:30 games OR top of the 5th, whichever comes 1st in all 3 games. NO WAIVER for 8:30 games due to running meter for lights.

8. SUBSTITUTIONS

NOTE: The league recognizes two types of sub players. Those from another team's roster and those listed on your own roster.

8.1. Other Team's Roster

- 8.1.1. If you only have 8 players. You are allowed up to 2 subs from the roster of another team.
- 8.1.2. If you only have 9 players. You are allowed 1 sub from the roster of another team.
- 8.1.3. If you only have 10 players. You are allowed ZERO subs from the roster of another team.

8.2. Same Team Roster

8.2.1. Alternating Player

To invoke, please announce to the other manager you will be using alternating players immediately before or after the home plate prayer. Be prepared to hand them a copy of the complete lineup that includes the alternating players.

IF invoked, ALL players who show up (up to a max of 22 players) MUST be put into the lineup. You may not have some players share a spot and some players sitting on the bench.

In EVERY inning, at least one female player MUST be on the field to field 10 fielders.

At least one female batter must always bat in the 1-10 position.

Using this rule, there are 3 tracks: a fielding track, a shared batting track, and an all-batting track. They are independent of one another.

8.2.1.1. Fielding Track

In the fielding track, the primary player plays all odd-numbered innings.
The alternate player plays all even-numbered innings.

8.2.1.2. Batting Track

In the batting track, the players sharing the spot in the BATTING order take turns batting every time their spot in the order comes up. This is regardless of what inning the game is at. In the case of batting around in the order, it would be possible to have both players sharing the spot in the order bat in the same inning.

You may also have two players alternate at the DH batting position.

8.2.1.3. All Batting Track

All players showing up may be inserted into the batting order, effectively as multiple DH's. They can be inserted into any position on the field.

8.2.2. Alternating Player Caveats

8.2.2.1. Sharing Spot

If a player sharing a position is injured, then the remaining player in the shared spot takes over sole ownership of the remaining at-bats and fielding duties.

8.2.2.2. Replacement

In the event a player has to leave that is NOT sharing a spot in the batting order, you may move a player from a shared spot into the empty spot AFTER a meeting with the home plate umpire and the other manager. The person eligible to be moved into the empty spot shall be the person who made last out in the last shared position in the order. If that is NOT possible, whoever is available from the roster can be put into the empty spot.

8.2.2.3. Male/Female Alternate

If you only have one lady fielder and you pair her up with an alternate male player, you may NOT have 10 fielders during ANY inning.

8.3. Base Runners

Substitute base runners can be inserted in place of the batter that has reached base. The last person who made a batted out must be the runner.

8.3.1. Players needing a substitute runner are to be announced to both the umpire and opposing team before the game.

- 8.3.2. If a player is injured during the game, a substitute base runner will be allowed for the injured player for the remaining innings.
- 8.3.3. If a runner is injured on their way to first base, a substitute runner is allowed.
- 8.3.4. In the event there are no outs, the last batted out person in the previous inning must be the runner. (If 1st inning and no outs, last batted out from last game.)
- 8.3.5. Substitute runners are only allowed at first base, unless the runner is injured going to another base. If a player that has requested a substitute runner advances past first base to second or third during their at bat, no substitute runner is allowed, unless it is as a result of a dead ball situation.
- 8.3.6. Designated runner for batter at home plate.
- A senior aged 55 or over or a batter with an obvious physical permanent handicap shall be allowed to have a designated runner to run from home plate to the base(s). Batter **MUST** have a permanent physical impediment from running. Injured players may **NOT** use this rule!
- 8.3.6.1. Designated runner shall be the runner who made the last batted out.
- 8.3.6.2. Designated runner shall line up against the backstop and behind the line the 3rd base foul line would make if extended to the backstop. Runner will run on contact with the pitch and is allowed to run to any base (extra base hit).
- 8.3.6.3. An injured player whose injury occurred during the game may have a sub runner from home.
- 8.3.6.4. Designated runner stepping over the line **BEFORE** contact is made with bat, batter is out, and no runners may advance.

8.4. Other Substitution Cases

8.4.1. Late Arriving Players

A player arriving late must be put into the batting order at the last spot in the order once the game begins. You may not 'skip' the absent player and then have them bat higher up in the order once they arrive.

8.4.2. Defensive Insertion

Insertion of player(s) are allowed at any point in the ball game. Please call a timeout and approach the umpire and the other team manager.

9. GROUND RULES

9.1. Pitchers

9.1.1. Maximum Arc

The maximum arc of a pitch must lie between over the batter's head and a maximum of 12 feet above the ground. The umpire is advised to declare an illegal pitch by shouting "ball" while the ball is in flight. The "ball" call is negated if the batter elects to swing and the ball is in play, fouled, or a strike.

Managers are advised to have a quick conference with the home plate ump after the first illegal pitch is NOT called while the ball is in flight. Clarify with the umpire and resume play.

9.2. Batter's Box

9.2.1. If a batter steps on or across or in front of home plate and makes contact fair or foul, they are out.

9.2.2. If a batter's LEADING footsteps on the line representing the forward mark of the batter's box, which shall be marked as 1 bat length forward of the leading edge of home plate, that shall be considered stepping out of the batter's box and the batter is out.

9.3. Bases

9.3.1. Runners running to first base on a single must run to the orange safety base. The umpire may call runners who do not use the orange safety base out.

9.3.2. Runners 'rounding' the horn to go to second may touch either the white base or the orange safety base. They must avoid contact with the first baseman at all costs.

9.4. Walks

9.4.1. If the male player before a female player is walked without a strike thrown, then the female batter has an option to immediately take 1st base without batting, OR she is free to step into the box and bat. The decision to 'auto-walk' must be made before she steps into the box and takes the first pitch. This is ONLY valid when the count to the batter before they get their first pitch is a 1 and 1 count, typically innings 1 - 4.

The female player must be visible (on-deck circle) or acknowledged verbally to both the opposing pitcher and the umpire before the first pitch to the male batter.

9.4.2. In innings 5-7, the umpire can decide if a male player is walked with the intention of getting to the female batter, to allow an auto walk.

- 9.4.3. If the next batter after a female batter is also female and the first female auto-walked, the second consecutive female batter does not auto-walk.
- 9.4.4. A missing lady player in the lineup will now constitute an auto-out. Please inform the opposing team and the umpire. This auto-out will occur at the number ten spot in the order without exception.
- 9.4.5. With two outs, the male batter may NOT be walked to reach the auto-out spot and end the inning.

9.5. Runners

On any play at the plate, the runner must avoid contact with the fielder by sliding or other means.

In the event the runner makes aggressive contact, this shall stop play for unsportsmanlike conduct and will be addressed per Section 4.

- 9.5.1. If the runner makes contact with the fielder at home plate, it is at the discretion of the home plate umpire as to whether or not to call the player out.
- 9.5.2. A play at the plate shall be defined as the ball in flight or bouncing towards home plate regardless of whether the fielder is in position or not. The location of the ball must clearly be at or nearer to home plate than the pitching rubber (approximately 50 feet) and is subject to the umpire's discretion.
- 9.5.3. Runners moving from 1st to 3rd base must avoid aggressive contact with fielders at all costs even if a fielder is obstructing the base path (see below).
- 9.5.4. Obstruction: this is when a fielder who does NOT have the ball in their glove impedes the movement of a runner.
 - 9.5.4.1. The runner is awarded the base or bases if in the umpires' judgment the runner would have made it to that base if the obstruction did not occur.

9.6. Outfielders

Outfielders should be no closer than 10 ft. from the edge of the infield.

9.7. Infield Fly Rule

- 9.7.1. When it applies: (3-2-1-0 helper aid) 3 runners on base OR 2 runners on base (1st and 2nd only) AND 1 or 0 outs and the batter hits a pop-up.
- 9.7.2. How to apply: Batter is auto out if ball lands fair near an infielder or is caught fair by an infielder; runners CAN advance. Live ball until play is over. Does NOT apply to line drives.
- 9.7.3. ASA Wording

An INFIELD FLY is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder who stations himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for this rule.

When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an Infield Fly, the umpire shall immediately declare Infield Fly for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the baselines, the umpire shall declare Infield Fly if Fair.

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. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

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. 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.

10. LOCATION SPECIFIC GROUND RULES (Shamrock not in use.)

10.1. Shamrock Park

Applies at all times, no matter if people are present in the picnic shelter or playground or not. The boundary is the railroad ties for the playground and the concrete patio of the picnic shelter.

None of the following applies to the sidewalk.

10.1.1. Dead Ball Out

A ball that lands in the picnic shelter, or on or inside the boundary of the railroad ties of the playground on a fly. Also, a ball that rolls or bounces in and strikes a person in said area.

10.1.2. Ground Rule Double

A ball that rolls or bounces in but does not strike a person. Runners advance 2 bases.

10.1.3. Auto Home Run

A ball that lands on the picnic shelter roof.

10.2. McHenry Township Park

Applies to any fair ball that lands before the outfield fence then proceeds to bounce or roll past the foul pole. Ball is a ground rule double. Runners advance 2 bases.

11. GAME SCORES

11.1. Report all game scores via our online scores reporter form at www.churchsoftball.org/forms.htm (scroll to bottom) by Wednesday midnight after the game.

11.2. Failure to do so may result in the game being logged as a double-forfeiture.