

## 2009 WICOMICO COUNTY WOMEN'S SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL LEAGUE

### ADMINISTRATION

The Wicomico County Department of Recreation and Parks shall be responsible for:

- a. Conducting the organizational meetings.
- b. Writing the schedule of regular season games.
- c. Spiking, matting and lining the fields whenever possible.
- d. Keeping on file the rosters of each team and/or contracts of all players.
- e. Collecting and depositing all required fees.
- f. Judging the fitness of the playing fields within Salisbury up to 5 p.m., when there is a question due to bad weather

### DUTIES OF THE LEAGUE OFFICIALS

- a. will represent the league at all league functions
- b. will chair all league meetings
- c. will serve as an ex-officio member of any or all committees
- d. will assist the Recreation and Parks Department with the organization of league umpires
- e. will appoint a committee member to record the minutes
- f. will conduct all necessary league correspondence
- g. will appoint a member to serve as Treasurer
- h. will handle all disputes or protests arising out of league play as soon as possible

### DEPARTMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

A player may participate in any other organized softball leagues or teams sponsored by the Wicomico County Dept. of Recreation & Parks.

### LEAGUE REQUIREMENTS

1. Teams will be permitted to sign as many players as they deem necessary.
2. The player must be at least fifteen (15) years of age by the first of July. Any player not attaining this age by the date stated is ineligible.
3. All team rosters, team fees, and a minimum of 10 player contracts and contract fees must be turned into the Civic Center Box Office by April 14th, 5:00 p.m. Teams that have not submitted payment will not be placed on the schedule.
4. A player may not play for any team in this league until: (a) her contract is properly signed (b) she is properly released from another league or team (c) her contract and release is turned into the Civic Center Box Office by 5:00 p.m. the day of the game. Contracts turned in after 5:00 p.m. that day will be acknowledged the following day.
5. Any player signing a contract can only be released to a team lower or even in standings.
6. **A Contract will not be accepted without the contract fee, and the contract fee will not be accepted without the contract.**
7. Additions to or releases from contract agreements can be made up to the halfway point of the season (see schedule) and by team managers only.

### FEES AND FINANCES

1. Each team shall submit the entrance fee no later than April 14. Any team that has submitted the entrance fee and then decides to withdraw from the league after the schedule

has been made shall forfeit this entrance fee.

2. A contract fee should accompany each player's contract. The contract fee for county residents is \$25 and non-residents pay \$30. Checks should be made payable to Wicomico County.
3. Entrance fees - All checks or money orders must be made payable to the **Wicomico County**. If for any reason the check, cash or money order is not negotiated by the bank, all scheduled games for this team will be forfeited until the account is settled.

### **EQUIPMENT**

- a. Each team will be responsible for supplying its own game equipment, i.e., balls, bats, etc. A limited supply of game balls will be supplied to teams before the season.
- b. At the beginning of each game, the home team will supply a new game ball and the visiting team will supply a new or slightly used ball (must be approved by the umpire). Each team should also have a least one good ball on reserve in the event that another ball is needed. An 11 inch .47 cor, 500 compression ball will be used.
- c. All catchers must wear a face mask; the use of a chest protector is optional.
- d. Rubber cleats or tennis shoes must be worn. No metal cleats are allowed.
- e. All players on the playing field should wear shirts identical in color whenever possible.
- f. For safety and injury prevention, exposed jewelry must not be worn during the game.
- g. All teams must have an American Red Cross approved first aid kit at all practices and games.

### **SCOREKEEPERS**

The home team will be the official scorekeeper. All batting orders should include first and last names of players. It is recommended that both teams keep score and check scorebooks every ½ inning.

### **GAME TIMES**

Games will be played on Monday and Wednesday evenings. Starting times are subject to variation according to the playing field. Such changes will be listed in your schedule.

No new inning may start after a one (1) hour-fifteen (15) minute time limit. This means that there can be a tie awarded to each team. ***International Rule applies if there is time left.*** Tie games during the regular season shall be recorded as such. Tie games during the post season shall be completed.

### **WARM-UPS**

No warm-ups will be permitted on the infield before the start of the game.

### **FITNESS OF GROUNDS**

1. There shall be a one-half hour maximum waiting period in any case where a game is interrupted due to weather conditions. If at any time during the waiting period the umpire shall judge the grounds to be fit for play, he shall call the teams to the field and resume the game from the point of suspension.
2. For games that are scheduled for ball fields outside the City limits, the local team that uses this ball field as their home park will determine the fitness of grounds. If the field is not playable, it is up to the local coach or manager to contact the Program Director or League President before 5

p.m. on the day of the game. Condition of the fields will be determined by the Recreation Department. Games can be cancelled only due to uncontrollable conditions such as weather, etc. If you have not been contacted concerning cancellation by the Program Director or League President, both teams must report to the field ready to play.

3. If there is any question that the playing field or weather conditions are not suitable for play, both coaches must agree to cancel the game. If both coaches are unable to decide, the umpires shall make the final decision. In the event that the first game is cancelled, the second game will be cancelled as well. If either team leaves the field before the umpires call the game, that team will forfeit the game. **A game should be called at the first sign of lightning. In the event of lightning, please leave the ball field, go to your vehicle and take shelter. Stay out of the dugouts and bleachers. Avoid going underneath trees – trees attract lightning. Avoid metal fences, gates, and tall light poles and power poles.**

## **RAIN-OUTS**

If five innings have been completed (4.5 if the visiting team is losing) when the game is called, the game shall be considered complete and official (exception is the league playoffs). If five innings have not been completed when the game is called, the game will be re-scheduled from the beginning. Rained-out games will be re-scheduled in open slots during the week or at the conclusion of the season. Teams will be given at least a week's notice about make-ups (except for games rained out near the conclusion of the season or during playoff games). Games may not necessarily be made up on the same field originally scheduled.

## **FORFEITS**

1. Ten players constitute an official team. However, in the event a team has only 9 players, they may play with a minimum of 9. A team starting with 9 may add one player before the last out of the bottom of the second inning. If a team starts with 10 or 11 players and a player is injured (and there are no subs), the game may continue. However, an out is registered when that player is scheduled to bat. If the opposing team walks the batter prior to the vacant spot (injured player's turn at bat) and there are two outs, the automatic out is waived and the next batter in the line up will bat. If a team starts with 10 or 11 players and a player is ejected (and there are no subs) the game will be forfeited.
2. A Grace Period will be allowed for the **first game** only of a scheduled night. The grace period will be 5 minutes past the scheduled starting time, and will only be allowed in the event the team cannot field the minimum number of players (9).
3. In the event both teams of a scheduled game fail to appear for the game, each team will be credited with a forfeit.
4. Any team that forfeits a game (without notifying the League President 24 hours prior to game time), must pay a \$10 fine. After 3 forfeited games, a team shall be subject to possible ejection from the league, with the remainder of their scheduled games being awarded to their opponents. Any fines must be paid 1 week prior to the last regular season game, or the team will not be allowed to participate in the playoffs. Any unpaid fines will be carried over to the next year. (Exception: a forfeit that occurs during the game due to an injured player.)

## **INELIGIBLE PLAYERS**

1. Any team using an ineligible player will forfeit all games in which said player participated. In the event a player is proven ineligible, said player will not be allowed to continue participation. An ineligible player continuing to play in the league will result in the team's elimination from the league and forfeiture of the team's entrance fee, contract fees, etc.
2. All protests will be reviewed by a three-person committee and their decision is final.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

1. **COUNTY POLICY:** Any player physically or verbally assaulting an employee, volunteer, program participant or spectator will be subject to disciplinary action which will be decided in accordance to the severity of the offense. Physical assault is defined as offensively touching, shoving or striking another person without that person's consent. Verbal assault is defined as threatening bodily harm or directing excessive profanity toward another without that person's consent. The minimum penalty for these offenses shall result in a three game suspension with a maximum penalty of an indefinite suspension from the County's public recreation program.

No alcoholic beverages will be permitted at any of the playing fields. All offenses involving players and spectators, including and not limited to, the consumption of alcoholic beverages, loitering, creating a public nuisance and reckless driving, will be enforced as per the Penal Code of Maryland.

2. **LEAGUE POLICY:** League officers will have the right to impose other penalties on players, teams, etc., as they see fit concerning the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

The umpires have the authority to eject players, coaches and managers from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct, etc. Any person ejected from that game will be out the next game, also, unless the team decides to appeal an ejection (the following day) to the Program Director and League officers. The Program Director and officers will then decide if the ejection is justified and what penalty to impose. All ejections should be reported, whether you are appealing it or not.

## **PLAYING RULES**

1. The league shall adhere to the present year's official Slow Pitch Softball Rules (USSSA). There may be some local adaptations which shall take precedence over the Official Slow Pitch Rules.
2. **THE PITCH** - the ball must be delivered at a moderate speed underhand, below the hip. When delivering the pitch, the pivot foot has to be on the pitching rubber while the other foot can be anywhere. The pitcher has 10 seconds to pitch the ball once she gets it (and as long as the batter is in the box). The pitch shall be 3' from the release and 10' from the ground. The strike zone is that space over any part of home plate between the batter's back shoulder and her knees when she assumes a natural batting stance.
3. The pitching distance shall be 50 feet. The base distance will be 70 feet. Coaches and umpires are responsible for measuring these distances prior to the game. No protests will be accepted on pitching and base distances.
4. **SLAUGHTER RULE** - The league will abide by a Slaughter Rule. In effect, the following conditions must be met: (a) that the losing team has batted 4 times (innings) and (b) that the losing team is 12 or more runs behind at the conclusion of their fourth time at bat. Therefore, if the visiting team is losing, the game must be 3.5 innings, and if the home team is losing, the game must go 4 full innings. The game is over as soon as the twelfth run is scored, providing that the losing team has batted at least 4 times.
5. **EXTRA PERSON** (Optional):
  - a. Eleven women bat; opposing manager must be notified before game begins.
  - b. If the eleventh woman is used, the game must be completed with 11 women unless an injury occurs. If a ball player is removed from the game, any remaining players at the field under contract must occupy the removed player's position.

- c. The offensive player may be used as a defensive player at any time. The player leaving the game can become the offensive player or be removed from the game for a substitute. In any event, the batting order may not be changed.
6. **COURTESY RUNNER** – A courtesy runner is allowed for injured players or players over 40 years of age. The batter that made the last out will run for that player. **Once a player uses a courtesy runner they must continue to use one for the remainder of the game.**
  7. All substitutions must be reported to the umpire in charge, and to the opposing coach.
  8. **RE-ENTRY RULE:** Any players in the original starting line up (including the extra offensive player) may re-enter the game once in any position as long as they maintain the same batting order. The manager only may dispute the misuse of the Re-entry Rule. Any misuse of the Re-entry Rule will result in the ejection of the illegal player (illegal re-entry) and the coach. The coach will also be ejected for the following game.
  9. The league will abide by the offensive charge-conference rule.
  10. All batters will assume a 1 and 1 count when entering the batter's box.
  11. The league will abide by the third strike foul rule (one foul to waste).
  12. When a defensive player has the ball and is waiting for the runner, and the runner remains on her feet and deliberately crashes into the defensive player, the runner is to be declared out. The runner is out, the ball is dead and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision. If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected. In the umpire's judgment, if a double play could have occurred, the umpire can call a second out on another runner.
  13. The league will **not** utilize Rule 1, Section 13B (catcher remaining in catcher's box).

## **PROTESTS AND APPEALS**

1. Protest on matters of judgment by umpires or scheduling of games will not be considered valid.
2. The captain or manager of the protesting team must immediately notify the umpires and the opponent that the game is being continued under protest, before the next pitch.
3. **All formal protests must be submitted to the Program Director in charge and accompanied by a \$10 protest fee, within 24 hours after the incident occurs.**
4. A formal protest shall contain the following information to be accepted by the committee:
  - a. date, time and location of the game.
  - b. names of the umpire and the scorer.
  - c. rules and section of the Official Rules or local rules under which the protest is made.
  - d. decision and conditions surrounding the making of the decision.
  - e. all essential facts involved in the matter protested.
5. The protest board will consist of three non-affiliated persons. These people shall decide the protest and their decision is final.

## **UMPIRES**

1. The umpire has sole authority in conducting a game. If there are questions on any decisions, the coach, captain or manager **only** may consult the umpire. Any player approaching an

umpire in regard to a decision will be subject to dismissal from the game.

2. Umpires are paid and the league utilizes a single man system. Umpires will be assigned by the Association.
3. In the event an assigned umpire does not appear for the game, a person may be selected from the stands. If an umpire must be selected, both coaches must approve. After the game, the home team must submit the selected umpire's name to the Rec. Dept. for payment of the fee.

## **PLAY-OFFS**

All teams will participate in a double elimination playoff to be held at the conclusion of regular season play. Teams will be placed on the bracket according to their winning percentage.

Tiebreakers

- 1) Head to Head
- 2) Run Differential (between tied teams)
- 3) Coin Toss

There will **not** be a time limit on playoff games. (However, if a game is called due to the 11 p.m. curfew or rain, it will be played from the point it was called, even if five (5) innings are completed). The slaughter rule will be in effect during the playoffs. A team forfeiting one game in the playoff tournament will be eliminated from the bracket.

## **AWARDS**

All awards will be purchased by the League. Trophies will be presented to first and second place regular season finishers, playoff champs, play-off finalists, and playoff third place. Regular Season Champions and Playoff Champions will receive individual T-Shirts (15).