

ROCHESTER PARKS & REC / RSA

LOCAL POLICY & RULES SUPPLEMENT

Revised April 2019

Field Conditions - Game On/Off

Prior to game time: Sign up for alerts on the Parks & Rec softball website. This is the official means to communicate game status.

Please note that it is possible that games may be postponed on one or more fields but not necessarily on all fields. It is also possible that games in one time slot might be postponed while other game times will still play (e.g. a quick cloudburst passes through, but the fields are playable soon afterwards).

Once the game is in progress, the umpire on the field or the UIC shall make the determination on whether to suspend a game. **Only the UIC can make the determination to continue a game.**

Lightning – once lightning is spotted from any field at McQuillan, all teams are to vacate the fields and all games are to be suspended for 30 minutes. Every new lightning strike restarts the 30-minute suspension. See “Delayed game” (page 2).

Tornado – in the event of a tornado warning, or at the sounding of the tornado siren, games in progress are immediately suspended. Later games may be played in these circumstances:

- 1) The tornado warning has been expired for more than 90 minutes.
- 2) Fields are playable.
- 3) There has been no notable disruption in travel or power supply around Rochester.

The UIC/FS shall determine whether games will be played, and will err on the side of safety.

In effect, (some) games might be played after a tornado warning if the warning was early enough and if the warning turns out to be a non-event.

Postings will be made in real time on RSA social media outlets.

Game times

First game shall start at 6:15, and subsequent games start on the :15 or five minutes after previous game (whichever is later). The game may start earlier with both teams' consent.

Teams, be ready to step on the field when the previous game ends.

Dugout etiquette between games...

Exiting team shall leave through the end of the dugout.

Entering team shall come on to the field and enter dugout from the field.

If a team is not ready at game time as defined above, a forfeit shall be declared, and the opposing team shall be awarded a 7-0 victory. In the event of a forfeit, the winning team has the option to use the field until five minutes before the next scheduled game time, which they may use for practice or to scrimmage the other team, etc. The umpire has no obligation to be on the field during this time.

Game length

The umpire will keep official time on the field, unless the scoreboard has an operational timer. In this case, the umpire will also keep time as a backup, but the scoreboard clock will be the official time.

No new inning may begin after 60 minutes from the first pitch.* When there is no timer on the scoreboard, the umpire shall declare the time remaining at least each half-inning beginning when there are about 20 minutes to go. This applies to all games, including the last game of the night.

Games still tied at the time limit will be played out (through nine innings only).

*** PLAYOFFS – 75 minutes through the semi-finals. Time limit waived for championship games.**

Delayed game (weather, injury, protest)

When a game is delayed for weather reasons, the clock will pause during the delay.

A delayed game may not push back the start of the next game by more than 20 minutes from its scheduled start. Therefore, no new inning may start after 7:30, 8:30, 9:30 or 10:30. If a rain delay is less than 20 minutes, the 'no new inning' time will be adjusted according to the length of the delay, but cannot extend beyond the times listed above.

If a delayed game cannot be completed in the times prescribed above:

- 1) a regulation game may be five innings (4.5 innings if home team is ahead).
- 2) a regulation game may end in a tie, and will be recorded as such.
- 3) if it is not a regulation game, it shall be rescheduled and **resumed from the point of suspension.**

Make-up Games

Make-up games may be scheduled on an open field (e.g. Field 1 or 9:15), usually but not necessarily on the night your team normally plays. This could result in your team playing two games that night.

Pre-Game Conference

Team managers shall meet with the umpire prior to the start of the game. Points to be covered are:

Verifying home team, and the manager (only person to discuss questions with umpire)

Identifying proper balls to be used (umpire to inspect at or before conference)

Ground rules for the particular field

Type of batting line-up that a team is using (see pages 5-6)

Reminders about certain league rules and Points of Emphasis

Batters start with a 1-1 count

Homerun limits

Hit own ball – new ball coming in- **pitcher may ask umpire to inspect it**

Pitcher may back up, up to 6 feet

Hustle

Time limit

Sportsmanship

Official Softball and Bats

*** TEAMS WILL PROVIDE AND HIT THEIR OWN SOFTBALLS ***

The official softball for Park & Rec league play shall follow USA Softball specifications:

- 1) For ALL DIVISIONS of play (men's, women's and co-ed) play, only the 52/300 ball may be used.
- 2) Softballs will be available for purchase at the McQuillan concession stand.

A team may choose to hit any number of new or used balls during a game...

- 1) Balls are to be inspected by the umpire prior to or during the pre-game conference.
- 2) The 52/300 designation **must be** visible.
- 3) When another ball comes into the game, **the pitcher may ask the umpire to inspect it.**
 - a.) The responsibility for use of the correct ball lies **with the pitcher and the defensive team.**
 - b.) **If a ball is later discovered to be illegal, it shall be replaced with a legal ball. All play with the illegal ball stands.**

The 2019 list of non-approved bats can be found at found [HERE](#), and it is linked on the RSA website, under the Rules tab. The list will also be posted in the admin/umpire building at McQuillan.

Strike mats

Strike mats will be used as in previous years. A pitch that lands on the plate will NOT be a strike.

The mat shall be placed behind the plate, with a gap of approximately two inches, as determined by the umpire.

A legally pitched ball that lands on the mat (without touching the plate) shall be called a strike.

USA Softball pitching regulations remain in effect, except that the pitcher may back up, up to 6 feet (see below).

Note: Arc limit for any legally pitched ball shall be 6-10 feet.

Balls and Strikes

Each batter begins his/her at-bat with a count of one ball and one strike.

When the batter steps to the plate, the umpire shall declare, "The count is one ball, one strike."

Therefore, a strike-out occurs on strike three and a base-on-balls occurs on ball four.

There will be NO courtesy foul.

"No Mat Option" – If umpire and both teams agree, strike mat may be set aside for the game.

If for any reason both teams wish to put the mat back during the game, it shall be put back in place.

Pitching

In the first inning, the pitcher may take up to three warm up pitches. After that, one warm up pitch is allowed.

A new pitcher coming in to the game make take up to three warm up pitches.

A pitcher who leaves and then returns to pitch in the same inning shall receive NO warm up pitches.

For safety, we are using the USA Softball rule for Senior Slow Pitch – Rule 6(SP)-1-B... The pitcher may take a position up to six feet behind the pitcher's plate and within the 24" width of the pitcher's plate, essentially establishing a new pitching plate. All other preliminaries must be followed per USA Softball rule, especially the one-second stop prior to the pitch... Rule 6(SP)-1-B.

The pitcher may vary his location within this six-foot range from pitch to pitch.

Sliding

Runners are NOT required to slide at any base. However, a runner who does not slide is at increased risk of interference or a collision. Each of these carries its own penalties.

Home Runs

Home run limits: Mens and Women's: 4. **Coed: 2 per gender (4 total).**

When a home run (over the fence, untouched) is hit, and signaled by the umpire, the batter does not need to run the bases at all.

Game ending Run Rules

As per USA Softball Rules...

The 20-run rule will be in effect after three innings (2½ innings if the home team is leading by 20+ runs),

The 15-run rule will be in effect after four innings (3½ innings if the home team is leading by 15+ runs),

The 10-run rule will be in effect after five innings (4 ½ innings if the home team is leading by 10+ runs).

Proper uniform

Shoes – USA Softball Rule 3-6-G, with RSA modification

All players must wear closed-toe, fully-enclosed shoes while on the field or in the dugout.

STEEL CLEATS ARE NOT ALLOWED. Penalty: Remove illegal shoes, put on legal shoes, or do not play.

Headwear – from USA Softball Rule 3-6-A-2...

Ball caps and visors are optional.

...must be worn properly.

Handkerchiefs do not qualify as headwear and may not be worn around the head or neck.

Plastic visors are not allowed.

Dew rags are not allowed (RSA addition).

Dugout Conduct – RSA Modification of USA Softball Rules Supplement #16

Only on-deck batter may be on the field, along with batter, runners and base coaches.

Drinking is allowed in the dugout but NOT on the field.

Smoking is NOT allowed in the dugout or on the field.

(See Drinking and Smoking, page 7)

Players are not to leave the field for any reason unless justified by the umpire.

Who may be in the dugout

No person under the age of 13 may be in the dugout or on the field during the game.

Failure to observe this rule may lead to ejection of the responsible player.

Batting Order Options

A team may play with as few as nine players, and add players during the game using the Hoffman Rule. When starting with nine, NO OUT is recorded in the tenth position.

Co-ed: May have as few as eight batters, but must have even number of batting spots (8, 10, 12...).

See Co-ed Differences, next page.

Regular lineup (10 batters)

As per USA Softball rules. Normal substitution is allowed. However, if a player or players must leave the game, bringing the total number of players to nine, the team is now using the Hoffman Rule...

If player does not anticipate returning, NO OUT needs to be recorded in his or her position in the lineup.

If player does anticipate returning, then an out must be recorded in their spot when it comes up.

Exception: If a player is ejected, and there is no substitute available, the game will be forfeited.

Extra Player Rule – USA Softball Rule 4-4

The only difference between the Extra Player Rule and the Hoffman Rule is that with the Hoffman Rule, your team is batting ALL of its players, Using the EP Rule, you are batting 11, and still have subs available.

Men's and women's slow pitch:

An eleventh batter may be placed in the lineup. The EP may be placed in any spot in the batting order. The EP does not play defense, however he/she may be freely exchanged with any defensive player (i.e. the EP goes to 1B and 1B becomes the EP), as long as only ten players are on defense at any time. Normal substitution is allowed. However, if a player must leave the game, bringing the total number of players to ten, the team is now using the Hoffman Rule...

If player does not anticipate returning, NO OUT needs to be recorded in his or her position in the lineup.

If player does anticipate returning, then an out must be recorded in their spot when it comes up.

The same holds true if yet another player must leave the game, bringing the total number of players to nine.

Exception: If a player is ejected, and there is no substitute available, the game will be forfeited.

Extra Player Rule (expanded for co-ed play):

An even number of batters (12, 14, 16, 18, 20) may be placed in the lineup. Other parts of the rule are as above. When an odd number of players are available, special rules apply (see Co-ed Rule Differences, next page).

Hoffman Rule – applies to men's and women's teams only – NOT co-ed

A team may choose to bat all of its players (late-arriving players are immediately added to the bottom of the lineup), however only ten players may play defense at any time. Any ten players may play defense, and these defensive players may be freely exchanged. There are no substitutions when using the Hoffman Rule. If a player must leave the game...

If player does not anticipate returning, NO OUT needs to be recorded in his or her position in the lineup.

If player does anticipate returning, then an out must be recorded in their spot when it comes up.

Exception: If a player is ejected, and there is no substitute available, the game will be forfeited.

Team managers shall declare at the pre-game conference what type of line-up they will be using.

Co-rec Rule Differences, Exceptions and Clarifications

When a man is walked, the next batter is awarded a walk as well, which puts the man on second base. (Since this is a dead-ball situation, the man may go directly to second base without touching first base.) If the walk occurs with two outs, the next batter has the option to walk or bat.

Men and women *must* alternate in the batting order. Therefore, there must be an even number of spots in the batting order (8, 10, 12....).

When the number of available male and female players is not the same, either of these options may be used:

1. Per USA Softball rules, there will be either a substitute(s) or an out(s).

2. An “extra” player (not in the batting order) can be a DEFO (plays defense only). This would mean that one of the batters is not playing defense. It could be any batter (of the same sex) and could change at any time.

At any point in the game, a DEFO can bat for any batter (of the same sex). Once this happens, the DEFO is tied to that batter, and if he/she bats again, it may only be in that spot in the lineup. The DEFO and the batter that he/she batted for may exchange duties (batting & fielding), however they both remained tied to their position in the batting order.

This option may be implemented two or more times (i.e. five women and seven men available).

Defensive positioning: outfield – 2 men, 2 women; infield – 2 men, two women; battery – one man, one woman.

Outfielders **MUST** be in the outfield grass at the time the ball is hit.

Infielders may not be closer to the plate than the pitcher.

If a player must leave the game, the team may choose to “double-shrink” their line-up by also removing the player (of the opposite sex) immediately before or after the ‘leaving’ player in the line-up. This removed player may then become a DEFO or a substitute. *In this scenario only, this player may find themselves in a new position in the batting line-up.*

If it is anticipated that the ‘leaving’ player may return, then an out must occur in his/her spot in the line-up, and no shrinking occurs at all. Once the line-up has shrunk, it may not be expanded.

Note: Technically, the ‘shrinking’ does not occur until the ‘leaving’ player’s spot comes up to bat. A newly arriving player could substitute into that spot.

Team managers shall declare at the pre-game conference what type of line-up they will be using.

Courtesy Runners

USA Softball Rule 8-9-B-2: Any eligible player on the official line-up including available substitutes may be used as a courtesy runner. A courtesy runner may be used once per inning.

NOTE: Any Courtesy Runner used in Coed must be gender specific.

Also keep in mind Rule 8-9-C-2...

A courtesy runner whose turn at bat comes while on base:

- a. Will be called out
- b. Will be removed from the base and take their turn at bat.
- c. A second courtesy runner is not permitted.

Playing on more than one team

Players are allowed to play on only one team per night, and must be on the roster of the team for whom they play. Violations may be protested by the opposing team, per the policy below.

Protests

Eligibility protests – A team may protest the eligibility of players on the opposing team before or during the game by notifying the umpire. However, that team must first prove its own eligibility.

Eligibility Protest Procedure (protesting team must do this first):

- 1) First and last name of each player (in the line-up and substitutes) must appear in the scorebook.
- 2) All players must provide proper picture ID. Five minutes will be allowed for this.
- 3) If any player fails to provide proper picture ID, his/her team shall forfeit the game.
- 4) If both teams are found to have ineligible players, the game is recorded as a double-forfeit.

Protests involving an umpire's interpretation of the playing rules shall be heard and resolved by the Umpire-in-Chief on the spot. In the event that there is no UIC on site at that time, a written protest may be made to the Umpire-in-Chief.

Rule Interpretation Protest Procedure (if not resolved on-site):

Umpire shall make note of the situation on the back of the scorecard.

Protesting manager shall submit a 'written' protest in the form of an email to the Umpire-in-Chief.

It will be reviewed by the UIC, with a final decision to be made as soon as possible, but definitely prior to both teams' next games.

Protests regarding an umpire's judgment **are not allowed** (ASA Rule 9-2). Arguing judgment calls (ball or strike, legal or illegal pitch, fair or foul, safe or out, in-play or out-of-play, etc.) shall be penalized on the first offense by the umpire issuing a team warning. Further offenses shall result in ejection of the offender. (ASA Rule 4-8-C.)

Drinking & Smoking

Alcohol may be consumed in the dugouts during the game. There will be no alcohol on the field from the time the umpire starts the plate conference until the umpire leaves the field after the game.

Smoking is not allowed on the field or in the dugouts. Rather, since the dugouts are now open, keep smoking outside of the dugout.

Injured Player – USA Softball Rule 4-10 & RS#29

Time may be called DURING play if the umpire deems that an injured player requires immediate attention. All runners shall be placed on the base they have already reached or that the umpire believes they would have reached safely. Any runner called out prior to time being called will remain out.

Casual Profanity

The Casual Profanity Rule is used as a way to keep the language cleaned up and promote a family-friendly atmosphere at the ball park.

When a player (or other team personnel) utters a profanity in frustration with themselves or a teammate, the umpire will signal a delayed dead ball and let the play go on. Then the umpire shall declare:

- 1) The next batter out, if the profanity was uttered by the offense and the batter was out on the play,
- 2) The batter out, if the profanity was uttered by the offense and the batter reached base safely,
- 3) The base runner out, if he/she uttered the profanity and yet reached base safely (including scoring),
- 4) The first batter in the next half-inning out, if the profanity was uttered by the defense.

All other play stands. The Casual Profanity Rule will only be enforced if the umpire believes that the uttered profanity was loud enough to be heard by someone outside the ball field.

Profanity directed at others (opposing team, umpire, fans, etc.) is different, and may result in an ejection.

Age Eligibility

All players must be at least 17 years of age to play in Rochester Parks & Recreation softball.

Ejection / Suspension / Reinstatement

When any player (or other game personnel) is ejected, he/she is required to leave the field and the McQuillan complex immediately. If necessary, he/she shall be escorted out of the complex by the Umpire-in-Chief. The team manager (or acting manager) shall cooperate with the umpire and the UIC regarding the ejection and removal from the complex of the person ejected.

There are three levels of suspension for ejected participants.

- 1) Rules violation only – ejection is for that game only.
- 2) Unsporting Conduct – ejection from game plus one-game suspension
- 3) Flagrant Misconduct – ejection from game plus minimum three-game suspension.

Re-instatement for 2) and 3) above is *possible* only after meeting with RSA Board and UIC. Level of suspension will be determined by the Umpire-in-Chief.

Situations not covered by USA Softball and Local Rules

There may be times when a scenario develops that is not specifically addressed by USA Softball Rules or the RSA Local Policy and Rules Supplement. In these rare cases, the umpire, along with the Umpire-in-Chief have authority to make decisions that address the issue. When addressed by the Umpire-in-Chief, no further protest may be made.