Intramural Softball Rules

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Participation Warning

There are inherent risks of mental and physical injury while participating in the Intramural Sports Program. Our goal is to reduce or eliminate as many risks as reasonably possible to provide a safe and fun program. This does not mean that injuries will not happen. We ask for your full cooperation in following instructions regarding proper conduct, proper use of equipment and facilities, and adherence to the rules of each sport as established by the Intramural Sports Program. Participants are responsible for the cost of any injury; therefore, you are encouraged and recommended to have adequate health insurance.

Game Rules

Players & Substitutions

a. Teams are comprised of ten (10) players. A team may not begin or continue a game with less than seven (7). When the eighth and ninth players arrive, they may enter the game and bat in eighth and ninth position.

b. Defensively, teams must play with four (4) infielders, four (4) outfielders, a pitcher and a catcher. If a team has less than ten (10) players, they must still have a catcher.

c. Co-Rec: Teams are comprised of ten (10) players. A team may not begin or continue a game with less than seven (7) players. A minimum of four (4) of each gender must be present on the field and in the batting order at all times unless playing with 7 players, in which case the
ratio of players can be 4:3 favoring either sex. Up to five (5) males are allowed to play defense in the field.

d. Extra players may be used as an eleventh, twelfth, etc. batter, provided it is made known prior to the start of the game and his/her name is indicated on the scorecard. Extra players must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game. If extra players are used, any ten (10) players may play defense. Defensive positions can be changed, but the batting order must remain the same. All extra players must remain in the batting order except in case of injury. Injured players are simply removed and the rest of the order remains the same.

**Equipment**

a. Ball/Bases: Competitive Sports will provide a softball and bases for each game. Teams are responsible for equipment belonging to Intramural Sports and will be billed accordingly for any missing equipment and risk possible forfeiture of the game.
b. Bats/Gloves: Competitive Sports will have some bats and gloves available for checkout at the games, but teams are strongly encouraged to bring their own equipment. (There will not be enough gloves to equip a whole team!) Any bats that teams bring must be ASA certified with the ASA seal and not listed here: http://usa.asasoftball.com/e/build_batlist_one_page.asp.

**Length/Timing of Game**

a. The game time limit will be enforced from game time! Teams not present with the required minimum number of players ready to play five (5) minutes after start time will forfeit the game and it will not be played.
b. Games will consist of seven (7) innings. No inning will begin forty-five (45) minutes past the original start time of the game.
c. **Mercy Rule:** After three (3) innings or any inning thereafter if either team is ahead by 15 runs at the completion of an inning, the leading team will be declared the winner and the game will be over. After five (5) innings or at the completion of any inning thereafter, if either team is ahead by ten (10) or more runs, the leading team will be declared the winner and the game will be over.
d. **Time-Outs:** No time-outs will be granted during play unless for injury at the discretion of the official.

**Scoring**

The team scoring the most runs at the end of the game, as defined in Length/Timing of Game b., will be declared the winner.

**In Game Rules**

a. **Pitching:**
   i. The pitcher must have one (1) foot in contact with the pitcher’s mound until the pitched ball leaves the hand. The pitcher must deliver the ball the first time the arm passes the body (no wind-up of any kind).
   ii. The ball must be delivered at a moderate speed underhand below the hip with a perceptible arch which is at least above the batter’s head or six (6) feet from the ground before the ball reaches home plate. Pitches may reach no higher than twelve (12) feet. Speed of the pitch and height are left entirely to the judgment of the umpire.
   iii. **The ball is considered a strike if the ball hits the plate or any part of the plate extension.**
   iv. After each pitch, not hit, the catcher must return the ball to the pitcher. **No pick-off plays.**
   v. If the ball slips from the pitcher’s hand during the wind-up or during the back swing, it will not be a pitch.
   vi. Slow pitch softball does not allow for balks.
   vii. An illegal pitch is one that does not conform to the pitching rules. Each illegal pitch will be declared a dead ball by the umpire the moment it becomes illegal. An illegal pitch that is hit will be considered a live ball and will be played.

b. **Batting:**
   i. Each batter will begin with a 1-1 (one ball and one strike) count. Four (4) balls will constitute a walk and three (3) strikes will constitute a strike out.
   ii. If a batter reaches a two-strike count, regardless of previous pitches, the batter is allowed one more foul ball in the at-bat. Upon an additional foul ball, the batter is declared out by strikeout.
   iii. **Intentionally bunting or chopping is not allowed.** Players who do so will be called out.
   iv. Any foul ball above the batters head can be caught for an out. The ball remains live.
   v. A batter shall not intentionally strike the ball a second time, strike it with a thrown bat or deflect the ball’s course in any way while running to first base. The ball is dead, the batter is out and the runners may not advance.
vi. **Infeld Fly Rule:** The batter will be out if he/she hits a fair, infield fly ball, other than a line drive, with runners on first and second or first, second, and third. The fielder need not catch the fly ball. Runners may advance at their own risk.

vii. A batter is out if a fielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball or line drive with first and second, first and third, or first, second, and third base occupied with less than two (2) outs. Runners need not tag up and may advance at their own risk. This is a judgment call.

viii. A batter who, while hitting the ball fair or foul, steps with one foot completely out of the batter’s box is out. The ball is dead. Runners must return to their respective bases. This is a judgment call.

ix. A batter who steps on home plate while hitting the ball is out. The ball is dead. This is a judgment call.

x. **Hitting up the middle:**
   1. If a ball is hit up the middle, in the air, within the designated “safe area”, the ball will be ruled dead, the batter will be out and all runners return to their previous base.

c. **Base-Running:**
   i. No stealing of bases is allowed.
   ii. Anyone who leaves a base before it is hit will be called out. If a ball is swung at and missed and a base runner leaves his/her base then he/she will be called out.
   iii. **All players are encouraged to slide to avoid contact. When going into a base where there is a force play the runner must either slide into the base or get out of the way in the event of a possible double play. If this is not followed both the runner and the immediate succeeding runner will be called out.**
   iv. A run or runs may be scored, or runner advance, only as a result of a hit ball or play resulting from a hit ball. Runs may not be scored as a result of a wild pitch or passed ball.
   v. Two (2) baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously. The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to; the other baserunner may be put out by being tagged out.
   vi. If a team desires to walk a batter intentionally, they may do so by notifying the plate umpire, who will award the batter first base immediately. The ball is dead.
   vii. A baserunner is out when, while advancing or retreating, he/she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the interference is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the immediate succeeding runner will also be called out.
   viii. If a fair ball strikes the umpire or a baserunner after having passed a fielder (other than the pitcher), or having been touched by a fielder, the ball shall be considered in play.
   ix. Baserunners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out when a fielder obstructs the baserunner from making a base. The ball is still in play so
far as the other runners are concerned. The umpire’s judgment will prevail as the number of bases to be awarded to baserunners.

x. When the ball is in play and overthrown (beyond the boundary lines) or blocked, the ball will be declared dead and every baserunner will be awarded two (2) bases from the runners spot at the time of the throw. The awarded bases will be governed by the position of the runners when the ball left any fielders hand. If a fielder catches the ball and momentum carries them beyond the boundary lines, runners are awarded one base from the moment the fielder steps out of bounds.

xi. 11. Pinch Runners:
   1. If a pinch runner is requested, the pinch runner must be the person who completed the last out. In Co-Rec the pinch runner will be the last person of the same sex, completing the last out.

Interference
   a. Because of the necessary arrangement of the diamonds, the following is a general rule for IM softball: A fair ball that goes by the fielder or over his/her head and lands in an adjoining playing field will be in play. If the ball is intentionally or unintentionally interfered with, it will be the judgment of the umpire what affect the interference had on the resulting play, and the umpire will rule accordingly. Fielders and players should not stop play unless requested by the umpire.

Co-Rec
   c. Batting Order: All teams must create two (2) batting orders, a male batting order and a female batting order, and alternate batters from these orders. For example, if a team plays with six (6) men and four (4) women, the team must alternate male-female until all four (4) females have batted. After the next male bats, the female order will start again from the top. Any players arriving late are placed at the end of their respective batting order and cannot bat until the order begins again with the first batter from their order.
   d. Batting/Walking: When teams walk a male batter on three (3) straight balls, the female batter behind the male has the option to take a walk as well. If there is a strike thrown during the male at bat then the male will only get one base on the walk. Regardless of what the female batter does the male will get two bases on a 3 pitch walk and all other base runners will move up if the new male base runner forces them to by his position.
Injured Player(s) Policy
If someone on your team becomes injured, please contact the Intramural Program staff at intramurals@usu.edu or 435-797-8388 24 hours before your next scheduled game to inquire about replacing the injured player on your team. Doctor or Athletic Trainers note may be required. Intramural Sports Program staff has the authority to determine if an injured player will be allowed a substitute. There are limitations when it comes to who can substitute during tournament play. If someone becomes injured during the tournament, an eligible participant may play in their place. Once the injured individual becomes approved to play again, that substitute is then removed from the team roster.

Eligibility Requirements
Eligibility to participate in the Intramural Sports Program at Utah State University is restricted to certain members of the campus community. Review the following requirements carefully to ensure you and your teammates are, and remain, eligible. For questions concerning eligibility, please call our office at 435-797-8388 or email intramurals.usu.edu.

- Students: If you are enrolled at Utah State University with at least one (1) credit, paying the Campus Recreation fee, or are doing research and possess a current student activity card or proof of enrollment.
- Faculty and Staff: If you are currently employed by any department of Utah State University you can pay the Campus Recreation fee for $35.61 at the Registrar’s Office.
- Spouses of Students/Faculty/Staff: You can purchase a spouse pass at the Registrar’s Office that will give you access to participate for $40.
- Intercollegiate/Club Sport Athletes: You can only have two or three Intercollegiate or Club Sport athletes (depending on the sport) on an Intramural team that at one point were on the team roster during that current school year. See tables below for Intercollegiate and Club Sport Athletes on eligibility for Intramural Sports.

Intercollegiate/Club Sports Athletes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USU Sport</th>
<th>Club Sport</th>
<th>Intramural Sport</th>
<th># of Participants you can have on IM Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adding Players
Team captains are responsible for monitoring participants who join their team. If players are not on the team roster before 4pm of your scheduled game day, those players will need to get permission from the Competitive Sports Supervisor on duty. The cut off for adding players to rosters is one day after the season ends.
Sportsmanship Rating System

The sportsmanship rating system is intended to be an objective scale by which teams’ attitudes and behaviors can be assessed. Behavior before, during, and after a contest is included in each rating. Each team captain is responsible for educating **ALL players and spectators** affiliated with his/her team about the system. **Teams must maintain a 3.0 (“B”) average in order to qualify for tournament play.** Teams must also maintain a 3.0 (“B”) average during tournament play. The Intramural Staff will determine the score for the teams after each intramural contest. The Intramural Staff reserves the right to review and/or change any sportsmanship rating given. Captains inquiring about their team’s sportsmanship rating should do so the business day following the contest by contacting the Assistant Director of Competitive Sports or Graduate Assistant of Competitive Sports by emailing intramurals@usu.edu

The sportsmanship rating system is based on the following criteria, **but not limited to:**

- **4.0** = **Excellent Conduct and Sportsmanship (A)**
  - Team members cooperate with and demonstrate good sportsmanship toward members of opposing teams, spectators, and ALL campus recreation staff.
  - Team manager exhibits control over his/her team and spectators, converses reasonably and rationally with officials about rule interpretations, and cooperates by providing any information requested by any intramural staff member.

- **3.0** = **Good Conduct and Sportsmanship (B)**
  - Team members verbally complain about some of the decisions made by the officials and/or show minor dissensions, which may or may not merit an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
  - Teams receiving one unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will receive no higher than a “B” rating.
  - A team defaults the contest

- **2.0** = **Average Conduct and Sportsmanship (C)**
  - Team shows verbal dissent toward officials and/or the opposing team, which may or may not result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
  - Team captain exhibits minor control over team/spectators, but is in control of himself/herself.
  - Teams receiving more than one unsportsmanlike conduct penalties will receive no higher than a “2.0” rating.
  - Team is unable to produce a team at game time resulting in a forfeit.

- **1.0** = **Below Average Conduct and Sportsmanship (D)**
  - Team continually dissents the officials and/or opposing team from the court/sidelines.
  - Team manager exhibits little or no control over team/spectators or himself/herself.
  - Teams that have a player ejected will receive no higher than a “D” rating.

- **0.0** = **Poor Conduct and Sportsmanship (F)**
  - Team is completely uncooperative; manager has no control over team/spectators/self.
  - Teams play with ineligible participants or withhold any information requested.
  - Damage or destruction of any Campus Recreation facility/equipment.
  - Multiple player ejections or causing a contest to be forfeited by any reason than not having enough players will receive an “F” rating.
  - Any threatening behavior (verbal/nonverbal) towards any player, spectator, or campus recreation employee.
Teams receiving a "0.0" rating during tournament will not be allowed to advance. They will automatically forfeit the match and the opponents will move on if they have the appropriate sportsmanship.

Teams receiving a "1.0" rating during tournament must have their team captain meet with the Assistant Director of Competitive Sports before their next scheduled contest.

Teams that do not maintain a 3.0 during Tournament play, they will not advance in the tournament.

For full details and our entire Intramural Sports Program Manual, please visit https://www.usu.edu/campusrec/intramural_sports/homepage_intramural

Everything is at the discretion of the Assistant Director of Competitive Sports and the Graduate Assistants of Competitive Sports. If you have any questions, contact them at intrmurals@usu.edu or 435-797-8388.