



# **Rules and Procedures**

## **2024**

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*Changes appear in bold italic print.*

*Revised August 2024*

## Introduction

1. Rules governing Williamsburg Senior Softball League (WSSL) play will be in accordance with the USA Softball Association Official Rules of Softball except as revised in this manual to fit WSSL purposes. Where rules in this book are in conflict with USA SOFTBALL rules, the rules in this manual take precedence.
2. Some rules contained herein are USA SOFTBALL rules, for emphasis, and some are WSSL rules. However, not all USA SOFTBALL rules are in this manual.
3. Senior softball participants are males and females, 50 years or over for men and 40 or older for women, who engage in a recreational endeavor in furtherance of good health, sportsmanship, fellowship and fun. Ages are based on the current calendar year. The minimum age for new players will be decided by a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of Directors prior to the beginning of each season.
4. All references to gender in this publication are in the masculine form for brevity. The participation of women in WSSL is encouraged, appreciated and welcomed; however, USA SOFTBALL Coed Rules are not used.
5. WSSL plays recreational softball in accordance with USA SOFTBALL Official Rules of Softball except as revised in the WSSL Rules and Regulations in this manual to fit WSSL purposes. WSSL's play is not defined as Senior Championship Play.

## Rules

### 1. Definitions

- 1.1 Second home plate, hereafter referred to as the scoring plate, shall be placed eight feet from the back tip of home plate on an extended line from first base. The scoring plate is for use by the offensive team only.
- 1.2 A strike zone mat will be used. The mat will be twenty-one inches wide and thirty-four inches long measured from the front of the mat which covers the permanent home plate. ***The front of the mat will be aligned with and centered on the front of the existing in-field home plate. The white portion of the strike mat home plate will be considered to be in fair territory.***
- 1.3 Commitment line (no-return line) shall be marked perpendicular to the third base foul line approximately 25 feet from home plate (app 35 feet from third base). (As a rule of thumb this can be the edge of the third base side of the dugout.)
- 1.4 Substitute runner runs from home for a designated batter. Substitute runners will only be used in the Jamestown Division, and are approved IAW para 8.5.
- 1.5 Courtesy runner is a runner for an injured batter who reaches a base and will be used in both divisions.
- 1.6 The pitching area shall be properly designated with a pitching plate 52 feet from home plate.

## **2. Playing Field**

2.1 A commitment line, a scoring plate and a strike-zone mat, as set forth above, are items that shall be added to the playing field. The playing field shall have base path distances of approximately 60 - 70 feet and a pitching distance of 52 feet.

2.2 Ground Rules, when not posted at a diamond or in published form, are based on the mutual understanding of both team Managers.

2.3 Normally, the rules that apply to the fields at Williamsburg Parks & Recreation (WPR) fields shall apply to all parks where WSSL may play.

2.4 A double base shall be used at first base. Half of the base shall be white and positioned in fair territory. The other half shall be orange and positioned in foul territory.

2.5 The equipment for each game will be provided by WSSL. At the conclusion of play, all players should secure their own possessions and police the area to assure the field is left uncluttered. The last player to depart the dugout area, usually the manager, should make a cursory check for any equipment and secure the same for his teammates.

## **3. Equipment**

3.1 No shoes with metal cleats or spikes, removable molded or plastic cleats, or hard leather cleats shall be permitted, either in practice or during game play. Official softball shoes or shoes with soft rubber cleats are strongly recommended.

3.2 Any player may wear personally owned regulation shin guards or other protective safety equipment. It is strongly encouraged that pitchers use shin guards and face masks or facemask/helmet combinations. An item of questionable equipment must be okayed/approved on the field by the managers.

3.3 All players shall wear their team shirts or shirts of similar color and are encouraged to wear their league cap.

3.4 Bats must have an ASA (pre-2020)/USA (2020 & later) or NSA or 1.20 BPF certification stamp to be approved for use in WSSL games, practices or any other kind of sanctioned event. All bats within the dugout areas are subject to inspection by both managers and umpires. Any batter found to have used an illegal bat during game play shall be declared out and given a warning. A second violation will result in ejection from the game by the home plate umpire and potential league play for the remainder of the season. This decision will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors upon recommendation of the appropriate Division President.

3.4.1 Players will check their bats prior to use. The sites listed below contain information concerning both prohibited and approved bats:

[https://www.evansvillegov.org/egov/documents/1614373253\\_377.pdf](https://www.evansvillegov.org/egov/documents/1614373253_377.pdf)

<https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/Certified-Equipment/Equipment-Bats>

3.4.2 Altered bats. No bat may be structurally altered. Any bat structurally altered or otherwise having its physical characteristics altered is illegal. Cosmetic alterations, such as re-taping a bat handle, are not structural alterations. Out of concern for player health and safety the WSSL has a zero-tolerance policy towards the use of such bats and knowingly using such an altered bat will result in ejection from league play for the remainder of the season.

3.5 The official ball for league and tournament play shall be a league supplied, optic (yellow) color, 12", .52 COR softball with a low-compression rating (300 lbs. or less).

3.6 Only WSSL provided softballs will be used during WSSL games and batting practices. One new game ball will be provided in the game set up bucket. The home team for each game shall provide a backup game ball of the best quality available. The home team manager gets to keep the game ball at the conclusion of the game.

3.7 Player equipment not currently being used shall be kept in the dugouts. The top of the fence surrounding the playing area is considered part of the playing field; equipment should not be placed on top of the fence.

3.8 Use of a pitching screen during the game will be decided by the mutual consent of the playing Managers and both teams shall use the screen if it is used. If used during a game, a ball hit off the pitching screen is considered to be "in play."

## **4. Players**

4.1 Player Fitness and Injuries. Players are to self-certify their own individual fitness to play the game. If the Managers feel that an individual player is not fit to play the game, they may make an appeal to the Division President to decide.

4.1.1. Before each season begins, a Jamestown Division player with a long-term chronic injury that prohibits them from running bases-can make a request to the Division President to have a Substitute Runner from Home Plate. Substitute Runners are only allowed in the Jamestown Division and must be designated In Accordance With rules 1.4 and 8.5.

4.1.2. During the season, if a Jamestown Division player sustains a long-term chronic injury that will prohibit him from running the bases, he can request by text or email to the Division President that his status be changed to require a Substitute Runner-

4.1.3. A player, Manager, coach or Umpire who is bleeding shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment can be administered. Once bleeding has stopped that player may reenter the game.

4.1.4. If a player is injured during a game and cannot run from home, then that player shall not continue in the game.

4.1.5. Players are encouraged to fill out a personal medical information form for use by emergency responders in the event of an incapacitating medical emergency. Place the form in a sealed envelope with your name on it and give it to your Team Manager.

4.2 Batting Order: All players arriving to play are to be listed in the scorebook by the manager and shall bat in turn. A copy of the batting order will be provided to the Scorekeeper. Players arriving after the first pitch of a game will be listed at the bottom of the batting orders.

4.2.1. If batting out of order is discovered:

4.2.1.1. While the batter is at bat: the correct batter must take the batter's position and assume the balls and strikes count. Any runner advanced and runs scored while the incorrect batter was at bat shall be legal. There is no penalty whether discovered by the offense or defense with the incorrect batter is at bat.

4.2.1.2. After the incorrect batter has completed a turn at bat and before the next pitch, the incorrect batter's time at bat is negated. The player who should have batted is out. Any advancement or score of runners is negated. Runners not called out must return to the last base occupied at the time of the pitch. Any runner who is called out prior to the discovery of the infraction remains out. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat.

4.2.1.3. Once the first pitch occurs to the next batter after the out of order batter, then no penalties are incurred and play resumes.

4.3. Defensive Innings: Every player on a team's roster who appears for a game on time (first pitch) shall be used as a defensive player for at least three complete innings (Yorktown Division), or four complete innings (Jamestown Division) of a seven-inning game and two/three complete innings (Yorktown/Jamestown) of a five-inning game. Any player who arrives late shall be entered into the game defensively when, in the Manager's judgment, that player has warmed-up and is physically prepared to play. Once entered defensively, a player must play at least one half of the game's remaining innings.

4.3.1. While defensive players may be positioned as desired within their usual playing positions, no more than **four** infielders (NOTE: the pitcher does NOT count as an infielder for this rule) are allowed at any time during play.

**4.3.1.1. Jamestown Division only: No outfielder shall be positioned in front of the line in the outfield that is approximately 160 feet from home at the time the ball is batted. If the line is not there or not visible, outfielders should attempt to comply with this rule with guidance from the umpire.**

**4.3.1.2. Jamestown Division Only: At game time or during the game, should the defending team have fewer than 10 players, the batting team must supply a catcher while batting whose only role is to receive pitched balls from the pitcher. One of the defensive players must cover plays at home, and the defensive team may move one of their players to catcher if the batting team has a player on third.**

4.3.2. Other than the catcher, no defensive player may be positioned in foul territory at the time the ball is pitched to the batter. If this happens then the pitch does not count and it is ruled as a dead ball.

4.3.2.1 Players may leave the defense and return later to the same or different position. However, all players (except any player injured or unable to continue to play) shall bat in the order established prior to the start of the game. No more than eleven/ten (Jamestown Division/Yorktown Division) defensive players shall play on the field at any one time.

4.4. Number of Players: The minimum number of players scheduled to field a team is 10 for the Yorktown Division and 11 for the Jamestown Division. One day prior, Managers should know how many players are expected for their next scheduled game. The process for obtaining substitute players is outlined in Rule 14.

4.4.1. Jamestown Division Only: At game time or during the game, should the defending team have fewer than 11 players the batting team must supply a catcher while batting whose only role is to receive pitched balls from the pitcher. One of the defensive players must cover plays at home, and the defensive team may move one of their players to catcher if the batting team has a player on third.

4.4.2. Every effort will be made to have sufficient players to field two complete teams for each game. If a team has less than 9 players at game time then that team will forfeit the game.

## 5. The Game

5.1 All games will be played under a master schedule provided by the league and posted on the web site. Rainouts will be rescheduled if at all possible (no guarantees).

5.2 The second team listed on the schedule is the home team. When double headers are played by the same two teams; the first game visitors are the home team for the second game the home team for the first game shall occupy the first base dugout. Teams will not change dugouts for the second game.

5.3 Games are scheduled to start at 9:00 a.m., but not later than 9:15 a.m. By mutual consent, Managers may agree to start a game earlier, but not sooner than 8:45 a.m. Batting practice should start 30 minutes prior to the scheduled game start time. When two games involving different teams are scheduled for the same field, every effort should be made to start no inning of the first game after 10:15 a.m. The second game should start as closely as possible to 10:30 a.m.

5.4 No new inning in a game can begin after 80 minutes from the start of the game, except for an extra inning as provided in Rule 5.6. The time will be monitored by both the Scorekeeper and the Umpires. The Scorekeeper must notify the Managers and Umpires when there is "10 minutes remaining to finish play." The SK and umpire keep two timers: 70 minutes and 80 minutes. At the 70-minute mark, the home plate umpire will call the managers together and establish which inning will be the final inning. At the 80-minute mark no additional inning may start and the current inning (whether limited or unlimited runs) will stop at the end of that inning. When the 80-minute mark is reached, the Umpire must announce "time has expired, we will finish this inning." It should be noted that the next inning "starts" as soon as the third out is made in the bottom of an inning. The game clock shall be continuously running to include any time taken for injuries or rest breaks. Umpires will monitor the time of play so that the last inning is determined in sufficient time to provide for unlimited runs by both teams during its play.

5.5 Double-header games are scheduled as seven-inning games. No new inning may begin after 11:50 a.m. For this purpose, a new inning begins at the time the last out is made in the previous inning. If time for the second game is too short, a five-inning game may be played by

agreement of the Managers prior to the start of the game.

5.6 If the score is tied at the end of regulation play, an extra inning procedure will apply regardless of whether it is beyond the 80-minute time limit. Starting in the top of the extra inning (typically the 8th inning), the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who batted last in the previous inning being placed on second base. If the player who batted last in the previous inning is a Substitute or Courtesy Runner then the player who made the last scored out will be used as the runner. There are no run limits in the extra inning. Should the score be tied at the end of the extra inning, then the game will end in a tie.

5.7 In the event of a tie game (due to weather or time limits) each team will be credited with a tie in the standings.

5.8 When an unusual or unavoidable circumstance occurs (e.g., excessive heat, poor playing conditions, etc.), a game may be shortened or cancelled (prior to the start of the game) by mutual consent of both opposing team Managers.

5.9 Heat Restrictions concerning play: The WSSL will monitor heat condition forecasts and will provide notification that play is cancelled when the heat index during playing time is forecast at or above 95. Any such game cancellation is subject to being rescheduled for a later date if possible. Once at the field no game will start when the projected heat index during planned game time start is forecast at 95 or above. Once a game begins, if conditions on the field warrant adjustments for player safety, the following procedures will/may be implemented by agreement of the Managers:

- a. Start first game at 8:45am.
- b. Break for at least 10 minutes between the first and second game to allow players and umpires to hydrate and rest.
- c. Permit liberal use of Courtesy Runners. Any player may request a Courtesy Runner if they feel necessary.
- d. Teams will get on and off the field quickly between innings and no warm-up pitches or infield practice will be permitted except for a few warm-up throws for a new fielder or pitcher.
- e. Managers will encourage players to hydrate, monitor their players for signs of over-exertion and advise the home umpire of any potentially unsafe conditions.
- f. In the event the home umpire determines the playing conditions are no longer safe, or player(s) need to cease play reducing one or both teams to less than **10** fielders, the home umpire shall terminate play and report the situation to the WSSL for further determination as to completion of the game. This health and safety decision authority by the home plate umpire is absolute and the managers and their teams will respect it as such.
- g. Should there be disagreements, the Managers should err on the side of safety. If the game does not constitute a complete game, Managers must notify all involved players and the appropriate Division President. There shall be no regular season suspension of games. (Suspension in this case shall mean



terminating play with the intent to complete the game at a later date). Rescheduling will be the responsibility of the league.

5.10 The game format will be as follows: All batters will start with a one ball and one strike pitch count. As necessary, one courtesy foul will be allowed on a third strike foul (a foul on the courtesy pitch is an out). The batter will be out on a called third strike or a swing and a miss on the third strike pitch. There will be no additional courtesy pitch.

5.10.1 A foul tip is defined as a batted ball that travels sharply and directly from the bat to the catcher's hand(s) or glove/mitt and is legally caught by the catcher. A batted ball that travels with a visible arc (in the judgement of the Umpire) from the bat is not a foul tip and, if legally caught by the catcher, shall be ruled an out.

5.11. Inning Run Limits: The maximum number of runs a team may score is five (5) runs per inning. When the 5th run crosses the scoring plate, all play shall cease for that half of the inning.

5.11.1. During the last inning of the game, and any extra innings, either team may score an unlimited number of runs. Both Managers, before the start of the last inning, shall come to an agreement as to which inning constitutes the last inning of a game shorter than seven innings (e.g., fourth in a five-inning game). This is particularly important in the last inning of a double header so that play can be completed in a timely fashion.

5.12. Mercy Rule: A run ahead (mercy) rule is enforced when one team has a lead of 15 or more runs after five innings or four innings of a five-inning game. Complete innings must be played unless the home team scores the run ahead limit while at bat. When the visiting team reaches the limit in the top half of the inning, the home team must have their opportunity to bat in the bottom half of the inning.

## **6. Pitching Regulations**

6.1 The pitching area shall be properly designated with a pitching plate 52 feet from home plate. The playing field may not have a pitching mound. The pitcher must be in contact with the pitching plate when the ball is released from his/her hand. Any pitch released without the pitcher being in contact with the pitching plate will constitute an illegal pitch and called a ball, unless the batter swings at that pitch, in which case it is in play.

6.2. Legal pitches striking any portion of the strike mat or home plate (including the black edge) will be strikes. The height of a legal pitch from the playing surface must be between 6 feet and 12 feet.

6.3. If, in the Umpire's judgment, the pitched ball is less than 6 feet or more than 12 feet above the playing surface, the Umpire shall call "Illegal Pitch" and call a ball, unless the batter swings at that pitch, in which case it is in play.

6.4. "No Pitch" shall be declared when the pitcher pitches before a base runner has retouched his base after a foul ball is declared and the ball is dead.

6.5. The pitcher shall not bounce the ball or cause any distractions prior to delivering the ball. Each infraction will result in a "called ball."

6.6. Intentional Walk: A pitcher may intentionally walk a batter by intentionally throwing 3 consecutive balls. If, in the Umpire's discretion, it is deemed as an "Intentional Walk," the Umpire shall inform the Managers that an Intentional Walk has occurred for that batter. On any subsequent at bat for that same batter, if the Umpire determines that a second "Intentional Walk" has occurred, then the batter will be awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> base and all batters on base will advance accordingly.

## 7. Batting

7.1. Players must bat in the order in which their names appear in the scorebook.

7.2. If a player must leave the game for any reason and is not returning to the game, the player is not considered out during subsequent turns at bat. The player may not later reenter the game, unless departure was due to the "no blood rule" Rule 4.1.3 above.

7.3. If a player/batter is injured during his time at bat, and cannot continue to bat, he shall not be called out and the batter following in the order shall then come up to bat with a fresh ball/strike count. The injured batter may not later re-enter the game.

7.4. A batter who carries a bat to first base on a hit ball will be called out.

## 8. Base Running

8.1. On any fair batted ball hit over the fence for a home run, the batter and all runners are credited with a run. The batter and any runners on base are not required to run the bases.

***8.1.1 The first two fair batted balls hit over the fence at Kiwanis park fields by each team in a game are counted as home runs. Any subsequent fair batted ball hit over the fence by a team in a game will count as a single.***

8.2 Base stealing is not permitted. A runner cannot leave a base until the batter hits the ball. A runner that ***leaves a base prior to contact, or without contact being made will be called out if the runner is determined to be seeking to gain an advantage. If the umpire determines that no advantage was gained or sought then a warning will be issued. Should a runner leave a base prior to contact and the batter puts the ball in play then the runner leaving early will be called out at the end of the play and the batter and any other runners will remain where they are at the conclusion of the play. Should the runner leaving early be part of a force play, the runner being out will be considered as remaining part of the force as to not disadvantage the defense.*** On a foul ball, the runner who started running when the batter hit the ball must return to the base immediately so that play may resume. .

8.3. Players overrunning second or third base are in play and may be tagged out. Sliding into second or third base is permitted.

8.4. Intentionally sliding or diving into first base or into the scoring plate when scoring, is not permitted. Players doing so shall be declared out. A player may slide or dive into second and/or third base and when returning to any base.

8.5. Substitute Runners (only used in the Jamestown Division) will be used for a designated batter from home plate. The designated batter must have a chronic injury or chronic condition, and requires the prior approval of the Jamestown Division President. The player must meet all other minimum requirements except base running, and will be rarely approved. Designated batters normally must be approved before the beginning of the season, but may be approved by the Jamestown Division President during the season if an appropriate running injury occurs

8.5.1.-The Substitute Runner for each designated batter is the last player who was scored as an out. The Manager will ask that player to run for the designated batter. If the last out player does not agree to be a runner, then the next to last out player is asked, etc.

8.5.1.1. If someone is forced out by a teammate's hit, then the runner who was forced out is the last out, not the batter. In the first inning, if no out has been recorded, the last batter in the batting order will be the Substitute Runner.

8.5.2. Prior to the start of the game, the Manager shall let the opposing Manager, Home Plate Umpire and Scorekeeper know the names of the designated batters needing Substitute Runners.

8.5.3. The Substitute Runner from home must start from a position behind home plate, as marked before the start of each game. The starting position shall be an extension of the third base foul line and will be drawn to intersect the backstop fence-line accordingly. The Substitute Runner cannot start running until the batter hits the ball. A Substitute Runner that starts running before contact on the ball, whether fair or foul, will be called out. A Substitute Runner that starts running without any contact made on the ball, will be called out.

8.6. Courtesy Runners: If an injured batter cannot run all the bases without furthering their injury, then a Courtesy Runner for that injured player is allowed. The injured batter must reach at least first base on their own and must request a courtesy runner. Once the injured batter reaches base, the Courtesy Runner replaces the injured batter.

8.6.1. The Courtesy Runner for each injured batter is the last-player who was scored as an out. The Manager will ask that player to run for the injured player. The available player must agree to be a Courtesy Runner. If the last out player does not agree to be a runner, then the next last out player is asked, etc.

8.7. First Base Running—Orange v White Base: A batter-runner must use the orange base and the defending player must use the white base on the initial attempt to reach first base when there is a play on the batter-runner at first. A batter-runner shall be declared out if he initially touches only the white base when there is a play on him at first base. No appeal is necessary. (Exception: see 8.9.) After the base has been initially reached, the base becomes 15" by 15" (i.e., just the white portions) for all subsequent play.

8.7.1. If there is a force play by an infielder on the batter-runner, who touched only the white portion and collides with the fielder about to catch a thrown ball while on the white, interference is ruled, the ball is dead, the batter-runner is out, and all the other runners are returned to the base last occupied at the time of interference.

8.7.2. When a defensive player blocks the batter-runner's path to the orange base the batter-runner may touch the white base in order to avoid a collision. However, on any force-out attempt from the foul side of first base, the defense and the batter-runner can use either the white or the orange base.

8.7.3 **No** outfielder can throw out a runner at first base on a batted ball. If the runner rounds first base in fair territory **and attempts to continue to second base**, then any outfielder may make a throw to first base to attempt to throw out the runner as he returns to the base. Any outfielder may throw out runners who are attempting to reach second **base**, third base, **or home plate**.

8.8. Running Home: Once a runner's foot has touched the ground on or past the commitment line, the runner may not re-cross it in the direction of third base. The runner must continue on toward the scoring plate. Violation shall result in the runner being declared out. The ball remains live and no appeal is necessary.

8.8.1. To score, a base runner must touch the scoring plate before a defensive player in possession of the ball touches any portion of the home plate. Stepping only on the strike plate by the defensive player does not constitute an out.

8.8.2. After a base runner has crossed the commitment line, he may be retired at home plate only by a defensive player in possession of the ball contacting home plate before the runner touches the scoring plate. Once he has crossed the commitment line, a runner tagged by a defensive player in possession of the ball shall not be out.

8.8.3. If the runner touches or crosses over home plate (not the scoring plate), he shall be out and the ball shall remain in play. No appeal is necessary.

8.8.4. If the runner has passed the commitment line, continues to run on the original foul line, and interferes with the fielder taking the throw at, and in contact with the original home plate, a dead ball shall be declared and the runner is out.

8.8.5. If a runner passes the commitment line and is struck in fair territory by a ball thrown by a defensive player, the runner shall be out, the ball shall be dead, and other runners shall return to the last previously touched base. No appeal is necessary.

## 9. Interference, Obstruction and Infield Fly

9.1. Interference is defined as the act of an offensive player or team member that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. It may be in the form of physical contact, verbal distraction, visual distraction or any type of distraction, which would hinder the fielder in the execution of the play. Defensive players must be given the opportunity to field the ball anywhere on the playing field and throw the ball without being hindered.

9.1.1. If, in a force play, runners attempting to occupy second or third base in a double play situation veer off as to conform with this rule and the defense drops the ball before attempting the throw, the runner shall be called safe if, in the Umpire's judgment, the runner could have made the base before veering; if the ball is dropped in the transfer to the throwing arm, the runner shall be called out.

9.2. Obstruction is the act of the fielder (1) not in possession of the ball or (2) not in the act of fielding a batted ball, which impedes the progress of a batter-runner or runner who is legally running the bases.

9.2.1. A fake tag is a form of obstruction which occurs when a fielder who neither has the ball nor is about to receive the ball deceives the runner, impeding his progress. A fake tag is considered unsportsmanlike and the defensive player is subject to ejection from the game. Bases are awarded as deemed fair by the Umpire.

9.3. 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 bases, or first, second and third bases are occupied before two are out. Any defensive player who takes a position in the infield at the start of the pitch shall be considered an infielder for the purpose of this rule. The infield fly is ruled when the ball reaches the highest point based on the position of the closest infielder regardless who makes the play. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the Umpire shall immediately declare: "Infield Fly" and the batter is out. The ball is live and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught. The runners can tag up and advance once the batted ball is touched (prior to catching), the same as on any fly ball. If a declared "Infield Fly" becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

9.3.1. If an Umpire fails to call an obvious infield fly and the ball is not caught (or intentionally dropped), the procedure to correct the situation is to call time after all play has stopped, declare the batter out and return all runners to their bases. This will be done at the discretion of the Umpire.

9.4. If there is an overthrow on a play at first or third, and the ball contacts the fence, the runners may advance at their own risk, but cannot take more than one base on the play. A throw to try and put out the runner constitutes another play.

## **10. Dead Ball —Ball in Play**

10.1. The first third-strike foul shall be a courtesy foul and the batter will be entitled to another pitch. A second third strike foul is an out. Runners may tag up and advance at their own risk on a caught foul ball.

10.2. A batted ball bounding over or striking any portion of the white base shall be fair, and a batted ball bounding over or striking the orange base shall be called foul. If any portion of the ball is over the white base, the ball is fair.

10.3. If a ball leaves the playing field (such as going under the fence), the defensive player should not touch the ball and should raise both arms as a signal to the Umpire. The Umpire will then go to the location and decide. Failure to follow this procedure will result in the ball remaining in play.

10.4. On overthrows where the ball goes out of play or becomes blocked, runners shall be awarded two bases from the last base touched at the time the ball left the thrower's hand. The runner's direction has no bearing on the award (i.e., if the runner has rounded a base and is returning to that base when the ball is thrown, he is awarded two additional bases). If a runner touches the next base and returns to his original base, he is awarded two bases, from the original base. If two runners are between the same two bases, the two additional bases are governed by the position of the first runner (i.e., two runners between first and second shall be awarded second and third).

10.5. When a fielder loses possession of the ball while attempting to tag a runner and the ball rolls into a dead ball area or becomes blocked, runners shall be awarded one base from the last base touched at the

time the ball enters the dead ball area or becomes blocked.

## **11. Expedite Play**

11.1. Pregame batting practice should end promptly at 8:50AM to enable first games to begin at 9:00 AM. This ten-minute interval between the end of batting practice and the first pitch allows time for Managers to brief their teams before they take the field. Games should be limited to 80 minutes from the first pitch. An inning starting prior to the 80-minute mark may be completed. No inning, except an extra inning, should start after the 80-minute mark.

11.1.1. The Scorekeeper and the home plate umpire are responsible for monitoring the game time.

11.2. Pitchers should take no more than 1 minute to deliver no more than 3 warmup pitches between innings or when relieving another pitcher. In the event of a high heat index situation pitchers will throw no warm up pitches between innings unless they are a new pitcher.

11.3. Substitute players should be alerted to the innings and positions they will play.

11.4. Batters, on deck batters, Umpires and base coaches should be in place promptly.

11.5. Courtesy and Substitute runners should be ready to enter the game quickly.

11.6. Teams should be encouraged to go on and off the field promptly between innings.

11.7. Infield and outfield throws should be eliminated after the third inning. An exception is a player entering a new position in the infield in which case he should be permitted to take only three throws.

11.8. The break between games should be no more than 10 minutes.

## **12. Umpires**

12.1. Any player may serve as an Umpire. At a minimum, new Umpires are required to "shadow" an Umpire during game play before being put into service. Experienced Umpires can bypass this process. If the WSSL offers group training, all experienced and new Umpires must attend.

12.2. Managers shall authorize players from their team to assume Umpire duties. The Managers shall not Umpire, except in unusual circumstances (and agreed upon by the opposing Manager), as they may be called on to resolve disputes.

12.3. If there is a single Umpire, he will be stationed at Home Base, and he makes all calls at all bases. If there is a team of Umpires, then the Home Base Umpire is the captain of the team and the final authority on calls. Any Umpire may ask their teammate for help on a call.

12.4. Only the team Managers and/or Assistant Managers have the authority to discuss game conflicts or an Umpire's call with the Umpire.

12.5. Judgement calls by Umpires are not under review to be overturned unless the Umpire making the calling appeals to his teammate(s) for help.

12.6 Protests: Protests will not be considered if they are based solely on a decision involving the judgment of an Umpire. Protests that shall be considered are:

- Misinterpretation of a playing rule,
- Failure of an Umpire to apply the correct rule to a given situation, or
- Failure of an Umpire to impose the correct penalty for a given violation.

12.6.1. The notification of intent to protest can only be made by a manager and must be made to the Umpire and the opposing Manager before the next legal or illegal pitch. The formal written protest should contain the following information: the date, time and location of the game; and all essential facts involved in the matter protested.

12.6.2. The official written protest must be filed within 48 hours to the Commissioner appropriate Division President.

### 13. Reporting Scores

13.1. The Scorekeeper is responsible to report the game score on the game day, in accordance with the instructions of the Web Master.

13.2. Managers must report all injuries and their perceived severity to the President of their Division whenever an injury occurs. Any time a game is stopped to inquire about the health of a player, an injury will have been deemed to have occurred.

### 14. Player Substitutions

14.1. All substitute players must be from the roster of one of the WSSL teams or an active participant in the league (e.g., Board Member, part-time, or newly joined player).

14.2. If a team has less than **11 players available to play, then** players from other teams will be used as substitutes to get to 11 players. They may also request a substitute to replace a shortstop, 3rd baseman, and/or pitcher. In addition, game day subs recruited at the field are allowable if the manager was notified of a missing player after 9 pm the previous night. The opposing manager must approve of the sub to ensure "like for like". Any team can legally play with as few as 9 players with no penalty.

**NOTE:** See Rule 4.1 above

14.3. Managers will request the number of players needed, the positions by type (infielder, first base, shortstop, outfielder, short fielder and pitcher), and the name of the specific player that will not be playing in the game. Effort will be made to provide substitutes who have similar skills (Yorktown Division) or a similar rating to the highest rated missing player (Jamestown Division).

14.4. Substitute players must bat in the lineup after all players on the roster have batted.

14.5. If a regular roster player shows up during the course of the game, then that player is inserted into the last batting position. The substitute may continue to play in the game and bat in the same position where they were assigned at the start of the game.

14.6. Late substitutions are permitted if a player has a “last minute” emergency or if a player fails to show up in time for the scheduled game.

14.7. During the game, and in the event of an injury, a substitute player may be used who is not in the game and the injured player must leave for the remainder of the game.

14.8. A weekly Substitution and Umpire List and Scorekeepers will be facilitated and kept by the Substitution Committee (SC).

## **15. Abuses**

15.1. Any abuse of the foregoing rules, umpires or fellow league members shall be reported immediately to the appropriate Division President who will recommend any disciplinary action for approval by the Board of Directors.

### **WSSL Code of Conduct**

Members are required to abide by the WSSL Creed and to comply with all WSSL rules and policies when involved in any WSSL activity or when representing WSSL in any capacity.

No member shall refuse to abide by an Umpire’s decision or, in the case of disputed rulings, the final decision negotiated by the competing game Managers.

No member will be allowed to participate in WSSL play if he has in his possession alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs or appears on the field of play under the obvious influence of such. No member shall engage in using threatening or insulting language or gestures, or any abusive tactics.

No member shall use rough tactics against any person. Similarly, no member shall violently throw or use any object against another individual that might cause physical harm to that individual.

No member shall engage in any physical attack, including shoving or hitting, against another person.

A member is liable for immediate removal from play and temporary suspension from further play by not adhering to this Code of Conduct.

Managers and umpires on the field have responsibility for handling violations of the Code of Conduct. Should violations occur, Managers and umpires may immediately remove such members from the game in progress (and subsequent game scheduled that day, if applicable), and report the incident as soon as possible to the appropriate Division President who will recommend any disciplinary action for approval by the Board of Directors.