



# **Rules and Procedures**

**2022**

## Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
Rules	3
1. Definitions	3
2. Playing Field	4
3. Equipment	4
4. Players	5
4.1 Player Fitness & Injuries	5
4.2 Batting Order	6
4.3 Defensive Innings	6
4.4 Number of Players	7
5. The Game	7
6. Pitching Regulations	9
7. Batting	9
8. Base Running	10
8.5 Substitute Runners	9
8.6 Courtesy Runners	10
8.7 First Base Running—Orange v White Base	11
8.8 Running Home	11
8.9 Interference, Obstruction, and Infield Fly	12
9. Dead Ball—Ball in Play	13
9.6. Expedite Play	13
10. Umpires	14
11. Protests	14
12. Reporting Scores	15
13. Player Substitutions from Other Teams	15
14. Abuses	16
WSSL Code of Conduct	16

## **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.

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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. WSSL plays recreational softball in accordance with USA SOFTBALL Official Rules of Softball except as revised in the WSSL Rules and Regulations 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 *Strike zone mat* will be used. The mat will be seventeen inches wide and twenty-five- and one-half inches long measured from the end of the mat to the tip of each side that abuts against the backside of home plate. The end of the mat that abuts to home plate shall have a "V" shaped notch that will conform to the outline of the back side of the plate.

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. The designated batter must have a chronic injury or chronic condition.

1.5 *Courtesy Runner* is a runner for an injured batter who reaches a base.

## **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 50 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 and will be the responsibility of the Managers to bring to the game. 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.

2.6 With the exception of the short fielder, 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.

## **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.

1. 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.
2. All players shall wear their team shirts or shirts of similar color and are encouraged to wear their league cap.
3. Bats must have an ASA (pre-2020)/USA (2020 & later) or NSA or 1.20bpf

certification stamp, and not be included on the USA softball list of non-approved bats, to be legal. Bats should be inspected and approved by the Managers prior to the game. Any batter using an illegal bat after this inspection (i.e., entering the batter's box) 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 WSSL Commissioner.

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>

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. The home team for each game shall provide a new ball. Back up game balls shall be of the best quality available.

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 Pitching screens are required for use in batting practice while the 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 Commissioner to decide.

4.1.1 Before each season begins, a player with a long-term chronic injury that prohibits him from running bases must declare his condition on the player application. The player then requests to the Board a Substitute Runner

from Home Plate. Approval by the Board is required. This is a player's season declaration approved by the Board, not a Manager's game day decision.

4.1.2 During the season, if a player sustains a long-term chronic injury that will prohibit him from running the bases, he can request to the Board that his status be changed to require a Substitute Runner (See RULES 1.4 and 13). The request should be an email or text to the Commissioner WSSL2019@gmail.com This is NOT a game day decision and it must be approved in advance of the game. If a player is injured during a game and cannot run from home, then that player should not continue in the game.

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.

## **4.2 *Batting Order***

1. All players arriving to play are to be listed in the scorebook by the Manager and shall bat in turn.
2. A copy of the batting order will be provided to the Scorekeeper and to the opposing team Manager if requested.
3. Players arriving after the first pitch of a game will be listed at the bottom of the batting orders.
4. If batting out of order is discovered:
  - 4.1. 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. 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.
  - 4.3. Once the first pitch occurs to the next batter after the out of order batter, then no penalties are incurred and play resumes.

## **3. *Defensive Innings***

4.3.1.1 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 of a

seven-inning game and two complete innings 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.

4.3.1.2 While defensive players may be positioned as desired within their usual

playing positions, no more than five infielders including the short fielder (NOTE: the pitcher does NOT count as an infielder for this rule) are allowed at any time during play. The infield dirt area or start of the outfield grass area ordinarily is the dividing line. Since some fields have deep infields, the Managers and Umpires will make this determination during the pre-game ground rules discussion. When umpiring their own game, team Managers, through mutual consent, will resolve this issue.

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.

4.3.3 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 defensive players shall play on the field at any one time.

#### **4. Number of Players**

4.1. The number of Minimum Players to field a team is 12. 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 13 below. Due to unforeseen circumstances the number of players for any schedule game may change. A board member will canvass Managers before games begin to assess the number of players in attendance and endeavor to move players from one team to another in an effort to balance lineups.

4.2. There will be no forfeits based on lack of players. Every effort will be made to have sufficient players to field two complete teams for each game. The Managers will determine how many players it takes to play a game.

#### **5. The Game**

1. All games will be played under a master schedule provided by the league and posted on the web site. Rain outs will be rescheduled by the league.

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 am 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 should start 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." When the 80 minute time 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. A Courtesy Runner cannot be used for this player at this time. If the player who batted last in the previous inning is one of the players designated to have a Substitute Runner (Rule 4.1.1 & 4.1.2), then the player that was the Substitute Runner for that batter 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 cancel play when the heat

index during playing time is forecast at or above 100, subject to games being rescheduled for a later date if possible.

When the heat index during planned game time is forecast at 90 or above on or before noon, the following procedures will be implemented:

- 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 11 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.

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 Deputy Commissioner. 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***

5.11.1 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.

5.10.2. 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.

5.11 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 50 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 4.2.7 above.
- 7.3 If a player/batter is injured during his time at bat, and cannot continue to bat, he shall be called out.
- 7.4 A batter who carries a bat to first base on a hit ball will be called out.

## **8. Base Running**

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.
- 8.2 Base-stealing is not permitted. A runner cannot leave a base until the batter hits the ball. A runner that starts running before contact or without any contact made on the ball, will be called out. 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**

- 8.5.1 Substitute Runners may be used for a batter from home plate. The designated batter must have a chronic injury or chronic condition prior to the beginning of the season. Use of a Substitute Runner requires the approval of the Board of Directors and will be rarely approved.
- 8.5.2 The Manager will ask a player to run for the designated batter. The player must agree to be a Substitute Runner. It's the players decision without retribution. Once a player has agreed to be a Substitute Runner, he must run for that batter every time he comes to bat during that game.
- 8.5.3 A Substitute Runner can only be used for a particular designated batter and cannot be used as a Courtesy Runner.

8.5.4 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 and the name of the player assigned to run for each designated batter.

8.5.5 The Substitute Runner from home must start from a position behind home plate, as marked before the start of each game. 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.

8.5.6 A Substitute Runner whose turn at bat comes when he is occupying a base will be called out. He will be removed from the base and come to bat.

## **8.6 *Courtesy Runners***

8.6.1 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.

8.6.2 The *Courtesy Runner* for each injured batter is the last available batted out in the lineup. If the last batted out player is already on base, then the second to last batted out player will be used, etc. The Manager will ask the designated available player to run for the injured player. The available player must agree to be a *Courtesy Runner*. In the case that the last batted out is the designated *substitute runner*, then the last batted out before the substitute runner will be the *courtesy runner*.

8.6.3 If any player, *Substitute Runner* or *Courtesy Runner* sustains an injury during the course of play, then a *Courtesy Runner* will be afforded according to the procedure in 8.6.2 above.

8.6.4 If a Substitute Runner sustains an injury, then the afforded Courtesy Runner's status changes to Substitute Runner and the injured Substitute Runner cannot run as either a Courtesy Runner or Substitute Runner for the rest of the game.

8.6.5 If any player that doesn't have a Substitute Runner cannot reach at least first base on their own, then they must be pulled from the game.

8.6.6 A Courtesy Runner whose turn at bat comes when he is occupying a base will be called out. He will be removed from the base and come to bat.

8.6.7 Prior to the start of the game, the Manager shall let the opposing Manager, Home Plate Umpire and Scorekeeper know the names of the injured batters requiring Courtesy Runners.

## **8.7 First Base Running—Orange v White Base**

8.7.1 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 30" (i.e., both the white and orange portions) for all subsequent play.

8.7.2 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.

8.7.3 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.

8.7.4 The only outfielder who can throw out a runner at first base on a batted ball is the short fielder only if he is positioned on the dirt part of the infield when the batter hits the ball. If the runner rounds first base in fair territory, 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 on-base runners who are attempting to reach second or third base.

## **8.8 Running Home**

8.8.1 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.

8.8.2 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.

8.8.3 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.

8.8.4 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.

8.8.5 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.

8.8.6 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.

### **8.9. *Interference, Obstruction and Infield Fly***

See the USA SOFTBALL Official Rules of Softball for the complete Rules and Points of Emphasis.

8.9.1 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.

8.9.1.1 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.

8.9.2 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.

8.9.2.1 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.

8.9.3 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.

8.9.3.1 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.

8.4 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.

## **9. Dead Ball —Ball in Play**

9.1 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.

9.2 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.

9.3 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.

9.4 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).

9.5 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.

## **9.6 Expedite Play**

9.6.1 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.

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

9.6.2 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.

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

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

9.6.5 Courtesy runners should be ready to enter the game quickly.

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

9.6.7 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.

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

## **10. Umpires**

10.1. 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.

10.2. 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.

10.3. If there is a single Umpire, who will be stationed at Home Base, then he/she 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. The Home Base Umpire is the final authority even if not asked to help (more than two Umpires).

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

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

## **11. Protests**

11.1 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.

11.2 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.

11.3 The official written protest must be filed within 48 hours to the Commissioner.

## **12. Reporting Scores**

12.1 The Manager of the team scheduled as home team for the first game is responsible to report the game score on the game day, in accordance with the instructions of the Deputy Commissioner

1. Managers must report all injuries and their perceived severity to the Deputy Commissioner 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.

## **13. Player Substitutions from Other Teams**

13.1 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)

1. Each team must field at least 12 players. If less than 12, then players from other teams will be used as substitutes. (NOTE: See Rule 4.3 above) If there are no available players from other games to be assigned to a team with only 11 players and If a team only has 11 players at the time of the start of the game and the opposing team has more than 12 players, then the opposing Manager will assign at his discretion one of his players to play for the team with 11 players. If there are no players available to be the 12th player for a team, then the team with less than 12 players will have an automatic out when it would be time for the 12th player to bat. Once the first pitch of the game is thrown, then no additional player can be added to the team with 11 players unless it is a player from the team with 11 players who has arrived after the start of the game. The newly arrived player may occupy the 12th player position and no out will be called when that player is at bat.

2. If a team has 12 or more players from its lineup, but is missing one or both of the critical positions, shortstop or pitcher, then the Manager may request a substitute for that/those critical position(s).

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.

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

13.6 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.

13.7 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.

13.8 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.

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

A

#### **14. Abuses**

Any abuse of the foregoing rules, umpires or fellow league members shall be reported immediately to the Commissioner.

#### **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 on the field have responsibility for handling violations of the Code of Conduct. Should violations occur, Managers 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 Commissioner.