

**SAN DIEGO HOSPITAL SOFTBALL LEAGUE
2003 SEASON RULES**

1. PLAYERS

A. There is a maximum of 25 players on team roster. Initial roster must be submitted on or before first game of season. Final roster for PLAYOFFS must be submitted to Rules Committee members at the 10th game of the season. To be eligible for playoff games each player must have participated in 5 games during the full season.

B. When 10 players are on the field, at least 3 must be female. A legal game may be play with 8 players of which 2 must be female.

C. Free substitution is to be allowed. Pitchers may exit and re-enter the game unlimited times without penalty.

D. Each manager will be responsible for maintaining a playbook for each game to ensure that players are on their roster. The playbook will be utilized during playoffs if a dispute arises.

E. Each manager will be responsible for providing a batting line-up to opposing team each game. This includes names of substitutes.

F. Any players arriving after the start of the game must be added to the bottom of the existing batting order and must have played 3 outs in the field subsequent to batting. If a team is batting only members who are also playing on the field, substitutes will bat where the player they are replacing batted. They also must have played three outs in the field subsequent to batting.

G. Players must be ROSTERED and must be at least 18 years old. *It is suggested that each team has fair/adequate hospital representation of players. *(due to reorganization and hospital closures).

H. If for lack of players from a participating team an official game cannot be started, up to 2 players of any gender may be added to team(s) needing players. These players must be ROSTERED on other Hospital League teams. Each opposing team manager will have the right of refusal for 1 player per game of those individuals from other teams. Players borrowed from other existing Hospital League rosters to fill in for other hospital teams, in order to have legal games, shall be called standby players. Standby players will be included on the teams game day line-up. No standby players can be used in any playoff game. Games played with standby players will count as official games as long as they meet the requirements of a complete game. If additional team member(s) arrive after official game starting time, the appropriate number of standby player(s) will leave the game as soon as arriving player(s) are ready to take their place.

4. **STRIKE ZONE**
 A. The strike zone shall be 17" from the rear of the plate making a 17" by 34" rectangle. A legally pitched ball not struck at, that lands on any part of the strike zone, including the plate and the 17" extension directly behind it, will be ruled a strike. The black portion of the home plate (surrounding rim) will be considered part of home plate. The direction the ball travels after touching the strike zone will have no bearing on the strike call.
 B. When, after having 2 strikes, the batter hits a second foul ball, the batter will be called out and the ball declared dead.

E. Each team must pitch to the opposing team.
 D. A pitched ball not struck that touches the ground before crossing the front of the plate shall be ruled a ball and declared dead. If the batter swings and hits or misses it, the pitch will be ruled a strike and the ball declared dead.
 C. If the arc rules are violated the pitch shall be called illegal. If the batter swings anyway and misses the ball it shall be called a strike. If the ball is hit, it will be considered in play.
 B. The pitchers foot must be in contact with the pitching rubber or a chalk line designating pitching distance. The pitching rubber should be a minimum of 42 feet in distance from home plate. The pitcher must present the ball in one or both hands prior to delivery.
 A. The arc of the ball must be between 6 and 12 feet. It may not exceed the height of 12 feet.

3. **PITCHING RULES**
 D. If a game is forced to end due to rain or other acts of God before 4 1/2 innings, are completed, it will not count as an official game and will not be rescheduled.
 C. If after 7 innings the game is tied and time is available, extra innings may be played. If tie games occur when the time limit has expired, each team will receive credit for 1/2 win and 1/2 loss. Playoff games will be played the full 7 innings or until the tie is broken if tied at the end of 7 innings.
 B. Umpires will allow a started inning to be completed. No new inning will be allowed to start after one hour and fifteen minutes.
 A. Forfeiture of regular season games shall occur 10 minutes after the time the game was allowed beyond the normal forfeit time. EXCEPTION: when games are canceled due to rain-out or unplayable field conditions, a 10 (ten) minute extension will be allowed beyond the normal forfeit time.

2. **TIME LIMITS**

E. A base runner who by coming to a base standing up, causes contact or impedes the throw to another base by a player attempting a play, that player and the batter/runner shall be called out. **If the umpire deems said action as flagrant, the runner may also be ejected from the game.**

D. At home plate, to avoid injury, base runners will touch the carpet placed parallel and to the right of home plate as the runners face it. The catcher, however, will tag home plate (the white/black portion, not the 17' extension). Once the runner has crossed the "commit line" he/she must attempt to score or be called out. It is important to note that tagging the runner with the ball between the "commit line" and home plate does not constitute an out. **All outs at home plate must be with the defensive player in contact with home plate. Any contact with home plate or the extension by the base runner from third base prior to touching the carpet will result in an automatic out, whether or not a play at the plate is made.**

C. Sliding is legal, however, contact with a fielder for the purpose of breaking up the play or distorting the ball is not legal. The base runner will be called out should this occur. Also, if in the Umpires judgment a double play would have occurred, the batter will also be called out.

B. Runners can overrun 1st base only and not be tagged out as long as he/she is in foul territory. **If he/she turns his/her body to the left after overrunning 1st base and the umpire feels there was an intent to go to 2nd base, they will be considered in play and may be tagged out.** Any player overrunning 2nd and/or 3rd base will be considered in play and may be tagged out regardless of the direction the player takes.

A. No base stealing is allowed. No leading off bases. A runner will be called out if he/she leads off before the ball is in play.

6. BASE RUNNING

- D. A "Point of No Return Commit Line" shall be placed 1/2 distance between third base and home plate.
- C. Cones shall be placed 90 feet behind 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases. Cording shall be provided in game bag to use as a measuring device.
- B. Base distance shall be 60 feet.

5. DISTANCES

A. Pitching distance at termination of delivery shall be no closer than 40 feet.

8. MISCELLANEOUS

A. The batter on deck must be in the designated "ON DECK" area.

B. The person at bat shall not deliberately bunt or chop at the ball. Batters who do so will be declared out and runners may not advance. The batted ball will be treated as a dead ball.

C. When a woman is at bat, all of the outfielders (including the rover) will be behind the cones in the outfield until the bat touches the ball.

D. All types of gloves may be used in the outfield.

C. No metal spikes or cleats are allowed. Molded one piece rubber cleats or gym shoes may be worn.

B. Batters must use an official softball bat. **Multi-walled titanium or similar multi-walled bats are illegal and may not be used in this co-ed league.** If an umpire is made aware (either through his own observation or by one of the team members) that an illegal bat is being used, the batter will be advised to use another bat. If a ball is hit with an illegal bat and this is brought to the umpire's attention before the next pitch is thrown, the umpire will call the batter out and return the base runners (if any) to their previous positions if an illegal bat has been used.

7. EQUIPMENT

A. The league will supply a new ball for each game. It must be an official limited flight softball (12" GRAY-DOT, DUDLEY, WILSON, DEBBERS, ETC.). The umpire will keep both game balls. The league will also provide the back-up ball. If both balls are lost or destroyed, the umpire will choose a suitable ball for the remainder of the game.

H. **For safety purposes, a "wet bag condition" can be requested by a player and granted upon the umpire's discretion.** This condition will provide that the runner does not need to make contact with the base, however, some part of the runner's body must cross the vertical plane of the base. This only applies if the runner is not forced. If the player is forced the runner must make contact with the base. The defensive player must always make contact with the base under any circumstances.

G. A base runner who is in the base path and not touching a base and is hit by a batted ball which is in play shall be called out.

F. Pinch running is allowed, even for the batter. However, a male cannot run for a female and vice-versa unless there are no other players of the same sex as the batter to be pinch run for. Normally the pinch runner should be the last person of the batters sex to have made an out. **Pinch running from home plate to first base will not be allowed during playoffs.**

Each batter must run to first base. If the player is safe at first base, a pinch runner may then be used to complete the rotation.

D. Umpires will take full control of games. It will be up to the umpires to make the calls based on his/her best judgment. Only the team captains will be allowed to discuss any calls with the umpire. The umpires have the authority to throw anyone out of the game (regarding excessive arguing, use of foul language, bad sportsmanship, etc.). **Umpires will make mistakes but their decision is final.**

E. No penalty will be assessed if any batter from the opposing team is intentionally walked.

F. The San Diego Hospital Softball League carries no insurance. Each individual is responsible for their own medical and legal insurance for injuries and/or accidents that may occur during or in conjunction with the playing of these games. It is each teams captain responsibility to inform their players of this fact. **A team roster form supplied by the league containing a legal release waiver for medical and legal responsibilities will be completed by each team manager. The roster is to be signed by each individual player prior to their participation in a league game.**

G. Any ball hit by batting team that rolls through outfield or is hit in air long distances **MAY BE DECLARED A HOME RUN** if holding team signals umpire by holding arms above head. Umpire will then indicate home run. The ball may be recovered when batting team is out.