Ball State University Intramural Softball Rules

Eligibility

To participate in Ball State University Intramural Sports, you must:

- Be a currently enrolled student with a valid and current Ball State University ID Card.
- Be a current Ball State University faculty or staff member with a valid ID Card.
- Be a Ball State University Rec Cardholder with a valid current Rec Card.
- No Burris or Indiana Academy Student may participate in the intramural sports program.
- Participation in intramural sports may be limited due to the following constraints:
  - Medical red shirts, as designated by the NCAA, cannot participate within intramural sports at any time.
  - If you are currently participating (includes practicing/playing) with an intercollegiate athletic team, you may NOT participate in the “associated sport” (see the Intramural Sports Policies and Procedures at www.bsu.edu/recreation/intramurals) within intramural sports. Once you cease your affiliation with the intercollegiate athletic team, you may become eligible to play intramural sports in the “associated sport.” Once your eligibility ends and you have been removed from that team’s active roster, you may participate within an associated sport in intramural sports. The Athletic Department Compliance Office to the NCAA reviews all eligibility designations and remains in full contact with this office.
  - ONLY TWO registered sport club team members may participate on an intramural sports team in an “associated sport” relating to their club sport.

Forfeits and Defaults

- A forfeit will be assessed under three conditions:
  - If zero members of a team do not show up within ten (10) minutes of a scheduled event. Teams should not see this as an opportunity to be late. For every minute late, the team with the minimum amount of players or more will receive one (1) run for a maximum of ten (10) runs.
  - A game that ends in result of a team’s unsportsmanlike behavior (i.e. 3 unsportsmanlike technical in a basketball game) will be scored a forfeit against the team that behaved inappropriately.
  - If a team is found to have an ineligible player on their roster.
- A team that forfeits twice in league play will not be eligible for the playoffs.

Protests

Invariably, disagreements may arise due to lack of knowledge of rules and procedures. A system has been set
aside for participants to “protest” two items within an intramural sports activity. Thus, there are only TWO times that you can file a protest:

- An eligibility concern
- A misinterpretation of a published procedure or rule.
  - A protest CAN NEVER be filed on the judgment call(s) of an official**

If a team feels that one or both of the following have happened, a team must do the following:

- A protest is considered valid only at the time that the discrepancy has taken place. For eligibility protests, you can only protest between the start and completion of a game. For a rule misinterpretation, a team must signify their intent to protest at the exact time. If subsequent play has started before the protest is signified, it’s too late to protest.
- If a protest is signified in time, the protesting team’s captain must make themselves available to file a protest form with the on-site intramural sports supervisor. The protest must be filed on the PARTICIPATION PROTEST FORM to be considered valid. This procedure will take a few minutes, as there is important information from participants, officials, and staff. The game will stop during this time and will resume when the proper paperwork is complete.
- The intramural sports supervisor will document all necessary information about the protest and game conditions.
- The game will continue when all paperwork is completed.

Players

Each team may have a maximum of ten (10) players on the field at one (1) time. A team may begin a game with a minimum of seven (7) players.

- All players must check in using a valid Ball State University issued ID.
- All substitutes must enter the field from their sideline and all replaced players must leave the field on their sideline.
- Teams must have a written line-up with players listed in the correct batting order on the scorecard ready at least five (5) minutes before game time. First and last names are required.

Captains

Each team shall designate to the Umpire the team captain or captains. The team captain is responsible for all information contained in the Intramural Softball Rules.

Equipment

- Recreation Services will provide balls and bats.
- Teams are required to wear the same colored shirts that contrast with the opponents. If teams cannot provide their own shirts, they may use the provided pennies. Shirts/jerseys/pennies may not be tied in a manner that creates any type of knot.
- All equipment is subject to the approval of the Intramural Staff on duty including bats which must be official ASA approved.
  - Players must wear shoes. Soccer / football type cleats, tennis, or Astroturf shoes are legal. All cleats must be less than 1/2 inch. No sandals, boots, or metal/sharp plastic cleats will be allowed.
  - Players may NOT wear pads/braces above the waist, casts/splints at any time, or bandanas with knots.

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www.bsu.edu/recreation/intramurals ~ SRWC 201A ~ 765-285-1753
Players MAY wear kneepads, gloves, covered knee braces, baseball hats, headbands, knit caps, and **plastic** sunglasses.

Players MUST wear athletic apparel with NO exposed metal.

Players may not wear any exposed jewelry of any type. Medical alert bracelets and necklaces are allowed only when covered and held down.

The Playing Field

- Bases will be 60 feet apart in the men's, women's, and co-rec competition.
- Umpires will establish ground rules prior to the game regarding out of play areas, permanent obstacles in the field of play, etc.

Playing the Game

**Start of Game**
- The home team will field first and bat last.
- The game shall consist of seven (7) innings or 50 minutes, whichever comes first. Should time expire, an inning that has started will be completed.

**Mercy Rule**
- A mercy rule will be enforced after if one team is ahead by 15 runs after four (4) innings or 10 runs after five (5) innings. NOTE: Unless already winning by this spread, the home team always gets to complete their half of the inning, even if the visitors get ahead by more than 10 runs.

**Dead Ball, Ball in Play, and Base Running**

**Dead Ball**
- When no pitch is declared.
- When a foul ball is not caught.
- When a runner is called out for leaving a base too soon.
- When offensive interference occurs.
- When a defensive player carries the ball out of play (intentionally or unintentionally).

**Ball in Play**
- When the infield fly rule is enforced.
- When a thrown ball remains in playable territory.
- When a base is dislodged while base runners are progressing around the bases.
- When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.
- When a thrown ball or fair batted ball strikes an umpire.
- When a thrown ball strikes a coach.

**Base Running**
- Base runners will be called out automatically for touching home plate.
  - **Safe/Out plays at the plate will be treated as force-outs.** A runner must cross a marked line extending from the front edge of home plate into foul territory on the 3rd base side of the bag. A catcher must possess a ball with his/her foot on home plate prior to the runner crossing this line to secure an out.
  - When a base runner must return while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.
  - No runner may return to touch a missed base or one he/she had left illegally after a following runner has scored. The defense must appeal for the out to be granted.
  - **Base runners must slide or make an attempt to avoid contact with a fielder making a defensive play on the ball when trying to reach a base. The runner is responsible for avoiding contact in these situations.** When sliding, runners must always slide for the base and will be ejected for purposely sliding into a fielder, or physically running into a fielder.
- A line will be marked perpendicular to the 3b foul line halfway between 3b and home. This will be called the “commitment line”. Passing this eliminates the right of the runner to return to 3b. Runners who proceed past the commitment line have committed to home and must continue.
- Base runners are entitled to advance but accept the liability to be put out under the following circumstances:
  - When the ball is overthrown into fair or foul territory and remains in play.
  - When the ball is batted into fair territory.
  - When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
- Base runners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out under the following circumstances:
  - When a fielder obstructs the base runner from making a base, unless the fielder is trying to field the batted ball or has the ball ready to touch the base runner.
  - When the ball is in play and is overthrown and goes out of play, all runners advance two bases from where they were when the ball left the thrower's hand.
- Obstruction is the act of:
  - A defensive player or team member which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.
  - A fielder, while not in possession of the ball, in the act of fielding a batted ball, or about to receive a thrown ball, which impedes the progress of a base runner who is legally running the bases.
- Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member, umpire, or spectator that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Contact is not necessary for interference to be called.
- Base stealing is not allowed. Each base runner may leave his/her base when a pitched ball is batted or reaches home plate, but must return to that base immediately after each pitch not hit by the batter.
- The base runner is out when:
  - In running to any base he/she runs more than three feet from a direct line between a base and the next base when a defensive player is attempting to tag the runner.
  - The base runner passes a preceding base runner before that runner has been put out.
  - The base runner legally overruns first base and makes an attempt to advance to second base and is legally touched while off base.
  - The base runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the umpire's judgment, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play (including shouting or waving the arms to distract the defense), the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.
  - The base runner is struck with a fair batted ball while off base and before it passes an infielder who could have otherwise made a play.
  - With a base runner on third, the batter or any offensive player interferes with a play being made at home base.
  - In the umpire's judgment, the base coach at first or third base touches or holds the runner physically to assist a runner in returning to or advancing from the base when a play is being made on him/her.
  - A runner, after being declared out or after scoring, interferes with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out.
- Touches home plate in an attempt to score
- Base runners are not out under the following circumstances:
  - When a base runner runs around the fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.
  - When a base runner is hit with a fair batted ball that has passed through an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the umpire's judgment no other infielder had a chance to play the ball. The ball remains "alive" under this condition.
  - When a base runner is hit by a fair batted ball after it is touched or touches any fielder.
  - When a base runner is hit by a fair batted ball while in contact with a base.
- If an accident to a batter-runner or base runner prevents him/her from proceeding in the game, a substitute runner will be permitted. If no substitutes are available, the runner will be declared out.
- If a base runner slides head first into any base they will be called out.

**Pitching**
- Each batter will start with a 1 ball and 1 strike count. The regulation 4 balls will result in a walk and 3 strikes in an out. A Foul Ball with two (2) strikes will result in the batter being called out. The ball will be dead and runners may not advance. Exception: If a player catches a foul ball, the ball is live and runners may tag and advance at the risk of being put out.
- A strike will be called when the ball reaches a peak height between 6 and 12 feet and lands anywhere on the strike plate. NOTE: The “strike plate” shall be placed 2” behind home plate. A ball landing on home plate is NOT a strike. A pitching landing in the dirt between home plate and the “strike plate” shall be ruled a strike.
- A pitched ball striking a batter does not entitle them to first base.
- If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, the pitcher notifies the plate umpire who awards the batter first base.
- Five warm-up pitches are permitted at the beginning of the game only for each pitcher. Pitchers will be allowed 3 warm up pitches between innings. No infield practice will be allowed between innings. *Substitute pitchers will be allowed three pitches, or one minute, before they begin pitching.
- If a pitched ball is lower than 6 feet or above 12 feet in the air on its way to the plate, the umpire may call the pitch ‘illegal.’
- The umpires call of ‘illegal’ does not make the ball dead, rather a hitter may decide whether to swing at the pitch. If a hitter decides to swing at the pitch the resulting hit/swing will count.

**Batting**
- Under no circumstances are runners permitted to steal.
- A base runner shall be declared out if he/she leaves their base while the pitcher has the ball in legal pitching position or before a legal pitch is hit.
- Sliding will not be required of a base runner, BUT a runner must avoid the defensive players while running the bases, even when the defensive player is in the base path.
- No head first slides will be allowed, whether heading towards a base or returning to a base. Any runner who is determined by the umpire to take a head-first slide will be automatically called out. Play may continue with runners at other bases like normal.
- Throwing a bat after a swing is illegal and will be addressed by the umpire. If accidental, the umpire may warn the batter. This warning will be the only warning for accidentally thrown equipment for either team for the duration of the game. The next thrown bat may result in an ejection of the offending player.

**Overthrow Rule**
When the ball is overthrown into foul territory, every base runner may advance at their own risk. The ball remains in play and such runners are liable to be put out while advancing. There is no limit on the number of bases a runner may take. However, should the ball go out of play territory, the ball is dead and the awarding of bases automatic. **IN DETERMINING THE AWARD OF BASES:** Runners are awarded two bases on overthrows. The two bases are from the last base touched at the time the ball left the thrower's hand. The award of bases is determined by the position of the front runner if there are two runners between the same base at the time of award.

**Sportsmanship Policies**

This portion of the document is designed to be a summary of the Sportsmanship Policy for Intramural Sports. Please refer to the Intramural Policies and Procedures Manual for a complete version of this policy.

- **No Player, Coach, or Team Follower Shall:**
  - Use foul or derogatory language, threaten, or verbally abuse any other participant or intramural employee before, during, or after the game. This includes trash talk.
  - Participate in a game for which he/she is ineligible.
  - Argue or talk back to the game official.
  - Intentionally strike, push, or trip another person. Fighting is prohibited.
  - Mistreat the facility, equipment, or supplies of Ball State University.

- **Warning/Ejection**
  - A warning/ejection system will be used to enforce the sportsmanship policy. Individuals will be issued a warning for unsporting behavior. A second penalty will result in an ejection. Ejections may be issued without warnings in specific situations, including all those that involve fighting.

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<th>Sport</th>
<th>Warning</th>
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<td>1st Verbal Warning</td>
<td>2nd Verbal Warning</td>
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- Team captains are responsible for the conduct of their players, sidelines and spectators.
- Fighting is defined as a participant intentionally striking, pushing, slapping, punching, elbowing, tackling or committing any other malicious act toward any other person. Fighting is never permitted during Intramural contests. Participants who fight will be ejected immediately and suspended from all further participation until the outcome of a disciplinary action meeting with the Office of Recreation Services Staff.

**Co-Ed Modifications**

- A team shall play with a maximum of five (5) males and five (5) females with a minimum of four (4) males and four (4) females. The number of males may never exceed the number of females but females may exceed males. Exception: A team that shows up with only 7 players may play with a combination of either 4 males and 3 females or 4 females and 3 males. Batting 2 males consecutively will result in an automatic out between the two hitters.
- At least three (3) outfielders must be behind the infield dirt and are not allowed to break this line until the batter makes contact with the ball.
• The line-up must alternate male, female throughout the game. If there are more females than males at some point, two (2) or more females will bat back to back.
• Substitutions must be female for female and male for male.
• Any time a male is walked, the female following him in batting order has the option of hitting or taking an automatic walk, but she must declare her intention **before** entering the batter’s box.
• Alternating balls will be used. Female softballs will be smaller than Males’. Males may only hit with male softballs. The umpire will call time and switch out the softballs with the pitcher.

**Overtime Procedures**

In the event that the game is tied after seven (7) innings or in 50 minutes, extra innings will be played with teams remaining in the same batting order. This procedure is only for during playoffs.

**Playoffs**

• Playoff seedings will be determined by total win/loss percentage, head to head results, total points allowed, and total points scored.
• Teams that forfeit twice during regular season will not be eligible for playoffs. Also, a team that defaults two (2) or more times will not be eligible for playoffs.
• Winning teams for each division will receive an Intramural Sports “Championship T-shirt”.

*These rules are not meant to be all-inclusive. It is the team captain’s responsibility to consult the Office of Recreation services for clarification on any of these rules.*