

# 2010 SPRING FARM SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES



## GENERAL:

1. The goal and objective of the league shall be to provide enjoyment and instruction of the game of **modified softball**. Good sportsmanship and basic fundamentals should be stressed by all coaches. The role of winning should be played down. An atmosphere of learning and fun is the objective of this program.
2. All matters concerning the league of rule interpretation shall be administered by Apex Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources (APR&CR) Department.
3. All volunteer coaches shall be selected by the Apex Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department.
4. All new players shall be selected by the coaches at the pre-season draft. All players returning from the year before have the option of remaining on the same team or going into the draft.  
  
EXCEPTION: New head coaches may option their child (children) and one assistant's child (children) onto their team.
5. Sisters shall be placed on the same team by means of a sister option in the draft.
6. Teams will select in the reverse order of finish from last year.
7. All coaches shall attend each practice or have his/her assistant attend in his/her place. Players **are not allowed to** practice without APR&CR approved adult supervision.
8. No player shall be dropped from a team without the approval of the APR&CR. Coaches shall report to the APR&CR any player that misses practice repeatedly. **For safety reasons, playing time may be reduced for not attending practices.**
9. If your team roster drops below **13**, the first player on the waiting list will be placed on your team by APR&CR.
10. All rules not addressed in these rules will follow the ASA interpretations.

## **OPERATING GUIDELINES**

### **A. Registration**

Player registration during the designated month and shall be coordinated and conducted by APR&CR. Under unusual circumstances, individuals may be added or deleted to/from the program at the discretion of APR&CR. This shall be done only after taking into consideration those involved and the ramification on the league.

### **B. Scheduling**

Schedules for all regular practice, game and makeup game situations, shall be coordinated through APR&CR taking into account field availability and holidays.

#### **PRE-SEASON**

1. Each team will be provided the same number of practice opportunities per week.
2. Any deviation from allotted schedule **MUST** be cleared through APR&CR and attendance **MAY NOT** be a player requirement.

#### **IN-SEASON**

1. Teams will be offered the opportunity to practice on a facility availability basis.
2. Teams may not reserve fields for more than one week at a time and may not do so before **8:00 am on Thursday of the week BEFORE** they wish to practice.

#### **POST-SEASON**

1. Single elimination tournament.

### **C. Try - Outs**

To be organized and operated by APR&CR according to facility availability and weather. Each team's coaching staff in this league will be given a station on the ball field and at specific time intervals groups of players eligible to be drafted will be sent to the staffs.

EXAMPLE: 68 players arrive for tryouts for placement on 10 teams. Every 10 - 15 minutes 6 or 7 players will arrive at your station for you to put them through some skill tests. In the end you should have been able to have had a "hands-on" tryout with each player present that day.

### **D. Farm Draft Procedures**

Organized and operated by APR&CR and the league coaches under the following guidelines:

1. Teams shall draft in reverse order of their finish in the previous season.
2. All teams will be age balanced.

#### **3. NO PLAYER TRADES**

Each team shall be permitted to keep returning players, sons, and daughters under the following conditions:

- a. Based on the total number of players needed to equalize the number on each team, each coach will draft until he reaches his maximum number of players then withdraw from the draft.

#### D. Farm Draft Procedures-Cont'd

**EXCEPTION:** When a team reaches 6 players on their roster, that team must hold until all other teams reach 6 players.

**NOTE:** Any team that returns 6 or more players will receive a first round choice, and then have to hold until all other teams have the same number of players.

- b. If after registration, tryouts, and the draft, a player wishes to be placed on a team, this shall be done at the discretion of APR&CR and the player shall be treated as a new resident in the area. Appointments shall be made per draft order.
  - c. Options may be awarded to a manager and/or coach's child who has registered to participate. All options on 9's will be protected through the third round, 10's will be protected through the second round.  
**NOTE:** A team may NOT have more than two option players on its roster during a season. A child that is placed on a roster by way of option remains an option player until he/she ages off that team.
  - d. A team entering the draft with 2 option players must take them in rounds 2, & 3. (**NOTE: Returning option players are still considered option players, but for draft purposes they are only considered returning players and are not taken in rounds 2 & 3.**)
  - e. **Sister options** will be drafted in the last round of the draft.
  - f. **Bonus Rounds:** All expansion teams shall be awarded bonus round picks. Each team will be awarded one bonus pick for EACH eligible player that DOES NOT return to the team. Bonus rounds begin after the third round A continue until all teams have a total of **six players** from returning players plus bonus picks.
  - g. **Pre Draft:** Teams that do not have 1 returning player will be given pre-draft pick until his/her team reaches 1 player.
4. **Expansion of league** shall be conducted in the following manner:
- a. The new team(s) shall assume the number one (and/or two) draft pick. Flip of a coin shall determine number one position when adding more than one team.
  - b. Each new expansion team shall be awarded one pre-draft pick Selection will be on a rotation basis with two or more expansion teams.

#### E. Length of Games/Tie Breakers

- **Length of games: 5 innings**  
**Game Start Times:**
  1. The clock will start for the first game of the day/night right at its scheduled start time. All of the following games will start 12 minutes after the last out is called of the previous game unless the 12 minutes ends before your scheduled start time, in which case you would revert back to the original schedule.
  2. **NO GAMES WILL START EARLY.**
  3. **NOTE: FIELD SUPERVISORS ARE IN CHARGE OF THE CLOCK. IF YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW MUCH TIME IS LEFT YOU NEED TO ADDRESS THE FIELD SUPERVISOR.**
- **No new inning may begin after 60 minutes of play. (If the home team is ahead with a child at bat and the time expires the child at bat, finishes the at bat).**
- **In situations where the second game of a week night cannot begin before 8:30pm said game will be moved to a later date in the season.**

### E. Length of Games/Tie Breakers-Cont'd

Interpretation: A new inning begins at the time the third out occurs in the previous inning.

**NO PRE-GAME INFIELD PRACTICE ALLOWED ANYTIME ON THE INFIELD.**

#### **BATTING LINEUPS**

1. **BATTING LINE-UPS OF ONLY PLAYERS PRESENT ARE DUE 10 MINUTES BEFORE THE OFFICIAL START OF THE GAME.**
2. **ONCE THE LINEUP HAS BEEN TURNED INTO THE FIELD SUPERVISOR NO CHANGES CAN BE MADE. (EXAMPLE: A PLAYER ARRIVES ONE MINUTE BEFORE GAME TIME. YOU CAN'T TAKE AND MOVE THAT PLAYER UP IN THE TOP OF YOUR LINEUP. SHE WOULD HAVE TO BE ADDED AT THE END OF THE LINEUP.)**

All games should begin with an umpire/head coach meeting at home plate to discuss playing rules (If this is not happening inform the program supervisor).

### F. Ties

#### 1. Regular Season Games

- a. **Farm Modified league:** any regular season game that ends in a tie **at the end of the time limit or the end of the fifth inning whichever comes first** shall have **one more inning of play to determine a winner**; if a winner cannot be determined at the end of this inning, the game will be counted as a tie.
- b. Any regular season game that ends in a tie shall be counted as one half a game win and as **one half a game loss** in the league standings.

#### 2. Post Season Games

**All post season games will be played until a winner is determined. Championship game will be FIVE (5) COMPLETE INNINGS.**

#### 3. For purpose of the next year's draft:

- a. If team records are identical, the first tie breaker will be head-to-head competition. This will be followed by a draw if head-to-head results can not be used.  
(Post season games are not counted towards the draft order.)

### G. Cancellations/Inclement Weather/Make-up

#### 1. INFORMATION

In case of inclement weather, a decision will be made by APR&CR at 4:00 pm on the day the game is to be played. Information may be obtained by calling APR&CR's

**INFORMATION HOTLINE: 249-3348**

#### 2. MAKE-UP GAMES

The department will reschedule games within 3 working days. Please contact us if you HAVE NOT RECEIVED your notification within this time period. If at all possible, all games that are canceled due to weather or other conflicts approved by APR&CR will be made up. However, IF EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES OCCUR, APR&CR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DESIGNATE WHICH GAMES WILL BE MADE UP. It is the responsibility of the coach to notify his/her players as to the make up date. APR&CR cannot be responsible for contacting players on an individual basis.

#### H. Speed- Up Rule

Catchers on base with 1 out (may) or 2 outs must be removed and a pinch runner substituted in her place. The runner is the player scored as the last out that inning. . *The catcher is the player who will be catching when the team goes on defense. Note: We do not use runners for the pitchers.*

#### I. Injured Player Substitution

In the event of an injury, the injured player may be replaced by a player who has already been in the game if no other player is available. *When replaced at bat (if not walked), the next batter assumes her count.*

- If a player is injured and leaves the game while at bat, running the bases or playing defense he/she may return as long as they do not miss their next at bat. If he/she does not return by their next at bat they will not be allowed to return to the game and NO OUT will be assessed for the missing player.
- If the injured player is a runner he/she may be replaced by the player who scored the team's last out. If a player is at bat and is unable to finish the at bat due to injury the next batter in the batting order would take over his/her count.
- A team must be able to field 7 players. If the team can not field seven players because of an injury or for any other reason, the game will be considered a forfeit.

#### J. Forfeits

Game time is forfeit time. A team must have at least 7 players to start the game. No out will be assessed for the eighth or ninth position.

#### K. Maximum runs per inning

Maximum of 5 runs per team for the first two innings of play. After the completion of the second inning there will be no maximum run limit per inning.

#### L. 12-Run Rule

If at the end of 3 1/2 innings (home) or 4 innings (visitor) a team is ahead by 12 runs, the game shall be called. *Note: If after four innings the visiting team has completed their at bat and has achieved a twelve or more run lead, the home team must have an opportunity to bat.*

#### M. Shortened/Postponed Games

Once a game has started and becomes postponed or shortened, that game shall be continued from the stopping point. Teams may play with different players if needed and may re-substitute in order to field a team. Total game time is limited to no new inning **after 60 minutes of play**.

1. 3 1/2 innings (home ahead) and 4 complete innings (visitors ahead) shall constitute a complete game.

#### N. 7 Player Rule

A team may start with **7 players**. No out shall be awarded for the missing batting position(s). If another player arrives he/she must be added immediately upon arrival and must occupy the last spot in the batting order.

### O. Dugout Area

1. The only personnel permitted in the dugouts are:

1) players; 2) head coach; 3) 2 assistant coaches; 4) scorekeeper NOTE: *NO BATBOYS*

2. **NO CELL PHONES ON THE FIELD OR IN THE DUGOUTS AT ANYTIME**

3. All dugouts should be cleaned out by the team that occupied them at the end of the game. This is the responsibility of the head coach.

4. Coaches must remain in the dugout when their team is on defense and only the Base coaches and on-deck batter may be out of the dugout area while on offense.

*Exception:* 1) To remove a pitcher- any approved coach

2) To attend an injured player - any approved coach

3) To confer about an error in rule interpretation or score -

**HEAD COACH ONLY!** (See conduct rule)

### P. Conduct

1. No coach or player shall belittle or berate the players or coaches of another team. Phrases such as "can't hit", "can't catch", or "can't throw" will NOT be tolerated.

*First offense:* Warning

*Second offense:* Ejection from game of offending person and/or head coach.

*PENALTY.* Any coach, **spectator** or player ejected from a game will be suspended for a minimum of 1 game up to a maximum of the remainder of the season. Any coach ejected from a game will be required to meet with the APR&CR Department.

2. *If a coach or spectator is suspended he/she may not attend the game(s) he/she is suspended for.*

3. Harassment of umpires and scorekeepers will not be tolerated. Questions should be asked by the HEAD COACH ONLY and done in an ORDERLY HUMANE fashion about rule interpretations only. Judgment calls are not to be argued. Failure to comply with this rule will result in immediate ejection of the guilty party and possibly forfeiture of the game. NO WARNINGS WILL BE GIVEN!!

**REMINDER:** The purpose of this program is to teach softball, have fun, and learn sportsmanship. Players look to their coaches as role models and the thing players see you do leave lasting impressions as they continue to play the game in later years. We're all human, and as such we ALL make mistakes including umpires, coaches and parents.

***It's the kids games so let them be the one that benefits most!***

### Q. Protective Headgear

Protective headgear required for batter, runner, on-deck batter, bat person, or any player warming up a pitcher. **Chin straps are optional.** Any player intentionally removing their helmet shall be **"WARNED"** for the first offense and then **removed from the game for the second offense.** If the player is removed from the game the players position in the batting order will be assessed as an out.

## R. Re -Entry Rules

1. Due to the continuous batting order, **free substitution is allowed** for all players & positions with the exception of the pitcher.
2. **All Pitchers:**
  - Trips to mound: **A maximum of 2 trips per pitcher per game even in one Inning.** During the 2<sup>nd</sup> visit the pitcher must be removed from the game as a pitcher.
  - **Pitchers:** If removed from pitching, she MAY only return as a pitcher ONCE later in the game; **but not in the same inning.** **This only applies to the starting pitcher.**

## S. Pitching Rule

1. No maximum innings per game.
2. When presenting the ball, **both feet must be on the pitching plate.** Both feet must remain in contact with the pitching plate at all times prior to the forward step. The pitcher may deliver the ball from a 12 o'clock position as long as the arm **is not** bent. SLING SHOT PITCH WITH THE HIPS PIVOTED IS ALLOWED;  
WINDMILL pitch delivery is NOT ALLOWED.
3. Pitching distance: 35' (Farm)  
Base distance: 60'  
Softball: 11'' 47 COR; Red Stitch; Optic Yellow Softball

**NOTE: Pitchers may not wear optic yellow or optic green long sleeve shirts under their jerseys (white and grey sleeves are allowed).**

## T. Hitting

1. Teams will use a continuous batting order throughout the game. Sides change after the third out.
2. If a batter cannot finish her time at bat, the next scheduled hitter will take said batter's place and assume that batter's pitch count.
3. **BATTERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WAIVE THEIR BATS (FAKE BUNT) WHILE IN THE BOX IN AN ATTEMPT TO DISTRACT THE PITCHER. PENALTY: BATTER IS OUT**

## U. Special Base Running

- a. When a pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate and in possession of the ball and the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive delivery of the ball, base **runners shall not leave their bases until the ball has been delivered and crosses home plate.**
- b. The violation by one runner shall affect all other runners. When a base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached the batter, the ball automatically becomes "dead", all action is stopped and returned to the point before the pitch was made. All other runners must return to their original base(s).  
PENALTY: Team warning to be given at plate before game  
Each offense: runner is removed and **NO OUT** is awarded

### U. Special Base Running-Cont'd

- c. Batter/runner MAY NOT advance to 1<sup>st</sup> on a dropped third strike
- d. The ball is dead when batter is walked. **ON ALL DEAD BALLS AFTER THE BALL HAS REACHED HOMEPLATE (EXCEPT ON A FORCED WALK) IF A RUNNER/RUNNERS LEAVE THEIR BAG THEY MUST RETURN TO THEIR ORIGINAL BAG AND NO OUT IS AWARDED.** Runners MAY advance to second base only on a force walk, a hit ball or ON A PASSED BALL. *If a play is made on an advancing runner due to a passed ball the runner may not advance any further than second base if the ball is over thrown or missed.* Advancement to third and home may only occur on a hit or a forced walk.

### V. Ball and Strikes Provision

Each pitcher shall be permitted three strikes or four balls for each batter. At the Conclusion of the fourth ball the modified softball walk rule will take effect.

#### 1. NO INTENTIONAL WALKS

### W. Fielding

Each team shall **field 10 players**. Each player shall be in the field for six outs on defense. Those players not starting the game in the field will be substituted into the field in the second inning *Penalty:* Forfeiture of game

### X. Participation

It is the philosophy of APR&CR that the emphasis of youth recreation should be on participation and skill development rather than winning or losing. Given this statement of philosophy the following guidelines will govern the **Farm Modified Softball season**.

1. *No child can sit consecutive innings unless authorized by the program supervisor.*
2. Each child must play a minimum of two complete innings (6 outs) during a regular length game.
3. In games where 4 complete innings is not anticipated each child must play at least one (1) complete inning (3 outs).
3. Where inclement weather or other circumstances cause the cancellation or postponement of a game, requirements 1 and 2 will be waived. However, if these games are made up, all requirements for participation will be in effect.
4. Failure to comply with these participation rules shall result in forfeiture of the game in question.
5. Protests shall be the responsibility of the coach and must be submitted in writing to APR&CR by 12:00 noon the following work day. It is recommended that a coach alternate his substitutes (those who start today should be a substitute tomorrow and vice versa).

**INTENT:** When ruling on a protest concerning participation, the coach's INTENT will be taken into consideration by the protest committee. It is quite possible circumstances may cause a player to not play the required time. The coach's intent is the determining factor in these situations.

**PENALTY:**

For failure to abide by the participation rules above (upheld participation protest), the following penalties shall apply to the head coach:

1st offense: suspension of game

2nd offense: suspension for rest of season

## X. Participation-Cont'd

**7. IF A CHILD LEAVES THE GAME AND DOES NOT RETURN DUE TO INJURY, SICKNESS OR SOME OTHER EVENT THE TEAM WILL NOT BE ASSESSED AN OUT FOR THE MISSING PLAYER, BUT ONCE THE PLAYER MISSES THEIR TURN AT BAT THEY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THE GAME.**

## Y. Protests

The following procedure shall be used for all protests involving **APR&CR Youth Modified Softball league.**

1. Protests will be allowed for rule misapplication only. No discussion will be permitted concerning judgment calls or the umpires integrity.
2. Protest must be noted (prior to the next pitch) in the official scorekeeper's book through the head umpire.
3. All protests must be submitted in writing to APR&CR by 12:00 noon the next working day. All protests should include:
  - a. A brief description of the play involved and the ruling that was made.
  - b. A rule reference (page and statement) detailing what ruling should have been made.
  - c. A \$25 protest fee will be returned if the protest is upheld. If the protest is declined, this money will be set aside to buy equipment for the league.
4. Protests will be ruled on by the Program Supervisor and a protest committee.
5. Notification of protest ruling will be given within one week after submission
6. APR&CR reserves the right to deny completion of protested game if it has no bearing on league standings or is not in the best interest of the league.  
PENALTY: Use of illegal equipment will result in a dead ball situation with the batter being declared out.
7. **POST SEASON TOURNAMENT: game stops until protest is resolved by the program supervisor.**

## Z. Equipment

1. The bat shall not be more than **30 inches in length, tape or sleeve MAY NOT exceed 16 inches in length from small end.**
  - 1a. **A legal bat is one having a length to weight ratio no greater than -10**  
PENALTY: Use of an illegal equipment will result in a dead ball situation with the batter being declared out. **(Ex: A BAT THAT IS 30 INCHES IN LENGTH CAN NOT WEIGH LESS THAN 20 OUNCES)**
2. No top lacing, webbing, etc. shall be more than 5 inches in length. A pitcher's glove may not be **white/gray/optic yellow or optic green.**
3. Head coaches must submit an Equipment Request form to the department equipment manager in order to exchange and/or receive additional equipment.
4. No titanium or double walled bats may be used for practices or games are allowed.
5. **ALL EQUIPMENT ISSUED TO A TEAM MUST BE RETURNED TO THE DEPARTMENT NO LATER THAN TEN (10) DAYS AFTER LAST GAME**
6. **NO PITCHER** may wear sweatbands or wristbands.
7. **ALL CATCHERS MUST USE A SOFTBALL CATCHER'S MITT.**

## SPORTSMANSHIP

Players will be allowed to cheer for their own team but not jeer the other team, i.e. loud songs, cheers, are unacceptable etc. **NO CHANTING ALLOWED**

### AA. Uniform

APR&CR will issue each player of each team a uniform. The uniform will consist of a visor, shirt and pants. Each player must wear his entire uniform, unaltered, to each game. **A player not in uniform or in an altered uniform will be declared ineligible to play.** Each coach will be given extra shirts, hats and pants for emergency fill ins. Coaches are expected to wear their coach shirt. **(NOTE: Pitchers do not have to wear their visors)** Players keep their cap, shirt and pants issued to them each season.

*NOTE:*

1. Altered uniform = is when a player defaces his hat, shirt or pants in any way.
2. Players may wear their own pants if (and only if) they exactly match departmental issued pants ( meaning no stripes, or different color(s), etc.)
3. **Shirt tails MUST be tucked in at all times.**
4. **NO JEWELRY ALLOWED.** Unremovable earrings must be taped over sufficiently.
5. **BATTING HELMETS WITH CHIN STRAPS MUST STAY ON UNTIL A PLAYER RE-ENTERS THE DUGOUT.**

***PENALTY FOR RULE AA 3-5:***

1<sup>ST</sup> OFFENSE: A WARNING WILL BE ISSUED. 2<sup>ND</sup> OFFENSE PLAYERS WILL BE REMOVED FROM GAME EVEN ON A DEADBALL SITUATION.

### AB. Slide

If a runner is going into base and there is an attempted play being made on that runner, **she must slide or avoid collision with defensive player.** If defensive player fakes a play on runner without ball and runner slides, then runner is awarded the next base. If a player does not slide and a collision does occur, then the runner is called out.

**Exception :** When batter is going to first base.

### AC. Bats

A bat may not be carried to 1<sup>st</sup> base or beyond due to safety concerns.

### AD. Infield Fly Rule

THE INFIELD FLY RULE SHALL **"NOT"** APPLY IN THIS LEAGUE.

#### **TOURNAMENT PLAY**

1. **If teams are tied in the regular season the first tie breaker will be the record between the teams in head to head competition.**
2. **The second tie breaker will simply be the toss of a coin.**
3. **All tournament games except the championship game will play by the regular season time limit/inning limit, whichever comes first.**
4. **If teams are tied at the end of the time limit/inning limit which ever comes first, the game will continue until a winner is determined.**
5. **The slaughter rule will be in affect during all tournament games even the championship game.**
6. **The championship game will be five complete innings with "NO TIME LIMIT".**

# NEW RULES

## *K. Maximum runs per inning*

Maximum of 5 runs per team for the first two innings of play. After the completion of the second inning there will be no maximum run limit per inning.

## *P. Conduct*

- 2. If a coach or spectator is suspended he/she may not attend the game(s) he/she is suspended for.*

## *X. Participation*

- 1. No child can sit consecutive innings unless authorized by the program supervisor.*