2018 FALL SOFTBALL LOCAL RULES AND PROCEDURES

NOTE: The current edition of the A.S.A. Official Rules of Softball will be the official rulebook for this program. Local rules and adaptations will supersede where applicable. Two competing teams or managers may not agree to alter any rules.

I. Facility Policies
   A. The umpire assigned by MSCR is responsible for all facilities.
   B. Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages while in city parks after 10 p.m. is prohibited.
      1. Participants may not consume alcoholic beverages at any time during their game. This includes walking behind the bleachers, bench or backstop to consume.
      2. If participants violate Policy I B, they are suspended from participating in that game and the next two (2) games played by their team as well as being reported to the MSCR Sports Office.

II. Equipment
   A. Uniforms:
      1. Any type of cloth hat, headband, scarf or visor is permissible, but hats need not be worn. Plastic visors are not allowed.
      2. Shorts are legal uniforms.
      3. Shirts must be worn by all participants, whether playing or not.
      4. Shoes must be worn by all players and coaches. Metal spikes are not allowed. Penalty: Remove to continue participation, refusal means disqualification for remainder of game.
   B. Bats: Only official softball bats as outlined by ASA rules are allowed and will be posted at each diamond. A list of approved bats can be viewed at www.asasoftball.com/about/certified_equipment.asp.
   C. Balls: The home team for each game must furnish two approved game balls, issued by MSCR. Men’s SP/Coed will use a 12” ball. Women’s SP will use an 11” ball.
   D. Bases: Will be supplied by MSCR. A "double 1st base" will be used at all levels of play.
   E. Jewelry: All jewelry must be removed when possible. This includes Fitbits, Jawbones, Misfits, etc. Rings or earrings that cannot be removed must be covered with tape. Penalty: Player must remove or tape to continue participation; unable or refusal to do so will result in disqualification from game.

III. Players and Substitutes
   A. Batting Orders: (Coed teams, see coed rules for batting order requirements.)
      1. Slow Pitch: Teams may begin, and play, a game with only eight (8) players.
         a. The eight players must occupy the first eight spots in the batting order.
         b. If the ninth and tenth players arrive late, they must bat in the ninth and tenth positions and can be added to the batting order upon arrival.
         c. If ten or more able players are present at the starting time, the team must list a minimum of ten in the batting order.
      2. There is no maximum limit on the number of players that may be included in a team's batting order provided all players listed are present at the start of the game. The A.S.A. designated hitter rule cannot be used.
a. Once the lineup is listed on the scorecard and the game begins, no further additions to the starting lineup may be made. Exceptions: III A 1 b.

b. Once a player is listed in the batting order, they remain in that position in the order for the entire game unless substituted for. (See III. B.)

c. If a player is listed on a team’s batting order and is not present for his/her first plate appearance an out shall be declared, the player’s name shall be struck from the line up, and the player will no longer be eligible to participate in that game. NOTE: Only one out is called, not an out for each time the player would have batted. IF a player is not present at game time, they SHOULD NOT BE LISTED IN THE BATTING ORDER. If they arrive late, the player can participate in the game as a substitute (III. B.), or may be added to the batting order if the team is playing with less than ten players. (III. A. 1. B.)

d. If a player, other than a base runner, is injured or must leave for a valid reason with no eligible substitute available, their position in the batting order is left vacant and no penalty is assessed. The player may not return to the game.

e. A courtesy runner may be used to replace an injured player who has reached base safely and is unable to run the bases. The injured player may remain in the game defensively and have a courtesy runner each time they reach base.

   a) Prior to each game, in the presence of the umpire, teams must indicate on the scorecard, all players with a prior injury that require a courtesy runner for that game. The courtesy runner must be used each time they reach base safely.

   b) A player who is injured during the game may also have a courtesy runner for the remainder of the game. If the injured player chooses to leave the game, their position in the batting order is left vacant and no penalty is assessed.

       The courtesy runner must be in the batting order and will be the player who made the last out. (In coed, the courtesy runner must be male for male, female for female). If the injured player chooses to leave the game, their position in the batting order is left vacant and no penalty is assessed. If a courtesy runner situation arises in the first inning and no outs have been recorded, the courtesy runner will be the last batter listed in the batting order.

f. If a player is ejected or disqualified with no substitute to replace that player, an out will be assessed each time that player was to bat after the ejection or disqualification.

3. If a team playing with 8 in SP has a player ejected or disqualified from the game, or a player must leave the game for any reason other than an injury, that team will forfeit the game. The only time a team may continue with less than the minimum number of players required is if a player is injured and removed from the game. No penalty is assessed.

B. Substitutions: The following supersedes the A.S.A substitution/re-entry rule.

   1. A starter is defined as anyone listed in the original batting order at the start of the game.
   2. If all players available are not listed in the batting order, a starter who is listed in the batting order may be replaced by a substitute.
   3. Any player may be substituted for and re-entered once, but players must occupy the same spot in the batting order whenever in the line-up.
   4. If a player has re-entered once, that player may be substituted for again but cannot re-enter a second time. The starting player and their substitute may not be in the line-up at the same time.
   5. All substitutions should be reported to the official scorer and the plate umpire to be announced. However, whether announced or unannounced, any play made by or on the substitute player shall be legal.

C. Fielding Positions:

   1. For players in the batting order, there is free substitution of players in the field on defense. However, there can never be more than ten players fielding at any one time.
   2. Players not listed in the batting order must follow the substitution procedures outlined in III B.
D. **Conduct:**

1. **Any player, manager, or coach ejected from a game under any circumstances is automatically suspended from the next two games played by their team.**
   
a. Umpires do not have the authority to waive this suspension in any case.
   
b. It is the manager's responsibility to control this suspension and upon proven violation, both manager and player are subject to MSCR action.

IV. **The Game**

A. **General:**

1. **Weather/Rain Number:**
   
   Call 204-3044, ext 1, after 3:30 p.m. the day of the game. All managers, players and umpires are encouraged to use the MSCR weather website at www.mscr.org or www.mscrsportsleagues.org

   **On nights when the weather decision includes “Umpires Decision” – MSCR will update the weather message and weather website until 7:30pm**

2. Games will begin at the scheduled starting time. NO GRACE PERIOD!
   
a. The diamond will be cleared by all participants, 5 minutes before the first scheduled game time.
   
b. There will be no infield practice before the second or third games of the evening. The only time allowed between games will be for the umpire to prepare for the next game.
   
c. If a game is completed more than 5 minutes before the time limit, the next game may begin before the scheduled starting time, only if both managers agree.
   
d. If the preceding game runs past the scheduled starting time of the next game, forfeit time will be the completion time of the preceding game.
   
e. No game will begin after 10:00 p.m. No new inning will begin after 11 p.m. - City Ordinance.

3. **Only one umpire will be assigned to each game.** If the umpire does not report, teams can agree to play or the game will be rescheduled.

4. Team listed first on the schedule is the home team and will occupy the first base bench, furnish two approved game balls (one new and one good, used ball), a scorecard and scorekeeper.
   
a. Only players, managers, coaches, bat persons & scorekeepers are to be seated on the bench.
   
b. Exception: In women's leagues, only one adult male per team, acting in any capacity (coach/manager/scorekeeper/bat person), will be allowed in the team bench area. That person's name must be listed on the scorecard and they may coach from one of the coaching boxes when their team is at bat. In men's leagues, the same restrictions apply to an adult female.

5. **Scorecards:** The winning team is responsible for delivering the scorecards to the publicity box before 10:30 p.m. the night of the game.
   
a. West side game cards can be dropped in the green box located on a parking lot island along the right field line of Goodman #1.
   
b. East side game cards can be dropped in the green box behind the 1st base bleachers of Olbrich #1.
   
c. Late cards should be delivered to MSCR.

   **Nightly scores will not be published the next morning in the paper, however standings and results will be posted on the MSCR website: www.mscr.org or mscrsportsleagues.org**

B. **Slow Pitch:** Men and Women

1. Games will be 7 innings or 1 hour time limit. No new inning shall be started after the time limit expires unless game is tied. (Exception: IV A 2 e)
   
a. A new inning begins immediately after the third out of the previous inning has been made.
   
b. If the home team is batting and leading in score when the time limit expires, the game is over immediately.
c. If the visiting team is batting when the time limit expires, they must finish the half inning. If the visitors are then leading, the home team must bat.

2. **There will be a 15 run rule applied anytime after 4 1/2 or 5 innings. (Fall Softball only)**
   a. If the home team is ahead by 15 runs any time after the visiting team has completed their "at bats" for the 5th inning or beyond, the game is over.
   b. If the visiting team is ahead by 15 runs any time after the home team has completed their “at bats” in the same inning, beyond the 5th inning, the game is over.

3. **TIE BREAKER: Any time the score is tied and the time limit has expired, the next inning will begin using the tie breaker rule.**

   **Tie Breaker Procedure:**
   a. The visiting team will place a runner (the last batter from the previous inning) on second base. If available, a legal substitute may be used.
   b. The visiting team has 3 outs with which to score as may runs as possible.
   c. After 3 outs are made, the home team will follow the same procedure as outlined in a.& b.
   d. Whichever team scores the most runs will be declared the winner. If the score is still tied at the completion of each additional inning, the procedure will be repeated from step a.

4. Three balls will constitute a walk. A strike out will consist of any combination of two strikes:
   a. Two called
   b. One called one swing and miss
   c. One called one fouled
   d. Two foul balls
   e. One swing and miss and one foul ball
   f. Two swinging misses

5. Home plate and the mat will be used in determining balls and strikes. If any part of the pitched ball lands on any part of the plate, including the black perimeter, and/or mat, it shall be a strike.

6. Arc limits will be a minimum of 6 feet and a maximum of 12 feet from the ground.

7. **At home plate, at all times (whether a play is being made or not) the base runner must touch the BLACK mat while the catcher has the WHITE home plate.** Catching the ball and stepping on the plate before the base runner arrives at the mat is all that is required to record an out. **Sliding is allowed.** Note: The runner may be put out at home by the catcher (or defensive player) tagging home plate (a force out) or be tagged out.

   *To create a “force situation” in all instances, a chalk line will be placed approximately 20 feet from home plate, across the baseline. Once a base runner has touched or crossed the line, the runner must continue toward home plate and cannot finish the play at third base. Note: If the runner who touched or crossed the "commit line" is on 3rd base when all play is completed, they may be called out on an appeal play, by the defensive team to the umpire.*

C. **Protest: Rule Interpretation Only**

1. Protest must be marked on the scorecard by the protesting manager at the time the protestable matter arose and before the next pitch whether legal or illegal. Circle the play in question.
2. The umpire and both managers must sign the card acknowledging the protest.
3. The protesting team must report to MSCR to fill out the proper form and file the $20 protest fee by 4:30 p.m. on the first working day of MSCR following the game.
4. Each “rostered” player must appear on the Roster Page that each team submitted to mscrsportsleagues.org or have submitted a paper player card (or have been added through communication with the MSCR Sports Office.). In all instances when a manager questions the eligibility of an opponent, the umpire will indicate on the scorecard, next to the player’s signature, the player that is being “challenged”. The game will continue and the “issue” will be handled as any other protested game. Any player who refuses to sign the scorecard will not be eligible to participate in the game. The protesting manager must inform the umpire before the last out of the game is made.

5. Any substantial time lost due to an injury, or the administration of a protest, will be added to the time limit of the game.
V. Local Rules

A. Pitching & Base Length:
   1. Distances: Men's, Women's and Coed Slow Pitch = 50 foot pitch; 65 foot bases.
   2. Warm ups:
      a. Beginning a game, or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than one minute may be
         used to deliver not more than 3 pitches in SP.
      b. At the beginning of each half inning, the pitcher will be limited to three warm up pitches in
         not more than one minute.
      c. For excessive warm up pitches, a pitcher shall be penalized by awarding a ball to the
         batter for each pitch in excess of the limits.

B. Batting:
   1. Players are reminded not to swing bats outside the protective fences at Olbrich and Goodman
      diamonds. Each team will be allowed one warning. Violation, after the warning, will result in
      disqualification from the game.
   2. Throwing the bat as part of the completion of a swing will result in one warning for each
      team/game. The second violation by a team will result in the batter being called out and the ball
      declared dead at the time of the pitch.

C. Forfeits: Two forfeits by a team during a season will result in the team being dropped from the program.

VI. Umpires

A. Umpires are representatives of MSCR and are officially in charge of each game.
B. The umpire will discuss rule interpretations only with managers of the two teams.
C. Umpires are empowered to eject players and managers from games for violations of official rules and
   regulations or unsporting conduct.

VII. Any circumstances arising that are not covered by the rule book or local rules will be left to the discretion
     of MSCR Sports League Administrators.