

# TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY INTRAMURAL RECREATIONAL SPORTS

## SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL RULES

*Truman State University Intramural Softball will follow Amateur Softball Association Rules. The following is a listing of the more common rules applying to Intramural play along with Intramural Recreational Sports Modifications. The complete ASA rulebook is available for viewing in the Intramural Recreational Sports Office.*

### Equipment

- A. Only official softball bats may be used for Intramural play. Bats will be available for teams to use or teams may use their own bats.
  - a. However, if a team uses its own bat it must bear one of the following certification marks:



- b. If a team wishes to use a bat made before the year 2000, which would not have one of the above markings, it must meet the approval of the umpire.
- B. The bat must be marked "Official Softball" by the manufacturer.
- C. The official bat shall be round with a smooth surface. It may not have any dents or cracks.
- D. Players may not use bats deemed illegal by the Amateur Softball Association. A listing of these bats can be seen at [http://asasoftball.com/about/pdf/04\\_Non\\_ASA\\_Approved\\_Bats.pdf](http://asasoftball.com/about/pdf/04_Non_ASA_Approved_Bats.pdf).
- E. Players must provide their own gloves
  - a. Gloves may be worn by any player, but mitts may be used only by the catcher and the first baseman.

### Players, Coaches, Substitutes

- A. Men's and Women's teams may have up to ten players on defense and are able to bat all players who are on their roster and present (20).
- B. Co-Rec teams may have up to ten players on defense, five being male and five being female, with the following positioning requirements: two males and two females in both the infield and outfield, and one male and one female in the pitcher/catcher battery. Odd numbers of females/males over the needed amount in the field can still bat but a female/male batting order is required.
- C. **Short Handed Rule:**
  - a. Men's and Women's teams may begin a game with as few as eight players.
  - b. Co-Rec teams may begin a game with as few as eight players, four being male and four being female with the following positioning requirements: two males and one female in the infield or the outfield, two females and one male in the infield or the outfield, and one male and one female in the pitcher/catcher battery. Co-Rec teams may also begin a game with nine players, with four being male and

five being female or five being male or four being female. If a team plays shorthanded with either three in the infield or outfield, at least one of the three must be male and one of the three must be female.

- c. Teams may add players as eligible teammates arrive.
  - d. If a team loses a player during a game for any reason, it will be allowed to continue.
  - e. Men's and Women's teams may not continue a game with fewer than eight players.
  - f. Co-Rec teams may not continue a game with less than eight players, four being male and four being female.
- D. Re-entry:**
- a. Any player may be substituted for and re-entered once.
  - b. Re-entering players must occupy the same spot in the batting order that they originally possessed.
- E. Substitutes:**
- a. If due to injury a team needs to have a substitute, any player who is currently on the bench may come in to take their place.
  - b. Substitutes must report to the umpire before legally entering a game.
- F. Disqualified Player:**
- a. Any player who has been disqualified from a contest must leave the field (out of sight and out of sound).
  - b. Disqualified players are banned from all future Intramural activities until they meet with the Intramural Recreational Sports Director to discuss reinstatement.
  - c. Arguing of balls and strikes will merit a team warning. Any repeat offense shall result in the ejection of that team member.
- G. Blood Rule:**
- a. Any player who is bleeding or who has blood on their uniform shall be removed from the game until the appropriate treatment can be administered.

## **The Game**

- A. Regulation Game:**
- a. A regulation game consists of six complete innings.
  - b. Six full innings need not be played if the home team is ahead after the top of the sixth inning.
  - c. A game is official after the fourth inning. If the home team is leading after the top of the fourth, then the game is official.
- B. Forfeited Game:**
- a. Any team that forfeits a game shall be removed from the tournament.
- C. Scoring Runs:**
- a. One run shall be awarded each time a runner safely touches first, second, third bases and home plate.
  - b. No run shall be scored if the third out of an inning is the result of:
    - i. Any runner is forced out
    - ii. A runner being tagged out or live ball appeal prior to the lead runner touching home plate
    - iii. A preceding runner is declared out on an appeal play
- D. Run Ahead Rule:**
- a. The game will be over if a team is ahead by:
    - i. 15 runs after three innings
    - ii. 10 runs after five innings
- E. Time Limit**

- a. There will be a 50 minute time limit placed on all contests.
  - i. No new inning can begin after time has expired, except in the case of a tie.
  - ii. A new inning begins when the final out of the previous inning recorded.  
As long as there is still time on the clock, a new inning will be played.

#### **F. Tie-Breaker Rule**

- a. If the score is tied at the end of regulation or at the expiration of the time limit, the following tie-breaking procedure will be used:
  - i. The offensive team shall place the last person to bat in the previous inning on second base and the game will continue as normal.

### **Pitching Regulations**

#### **A. Preliminaries:**

- a. The pitcher must take a position with both feet on the ground and one or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate through the entire delivery.
- b. The pitcher must come to a complete stop with the ball in front of the body. The front of the body must face the batter.
- c. The pitcher may not make any pitching motion while not in contact with the pitcher's plate.

#### **B. Legal Delivery:**

- a. The delivery must be a continuous motion.
- b. The pitcher must deliver the ball toward the home plate on the first forward swing of the arm past the hip. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the ball leaves the hand.
- c. If a step is taken, it may be forward, backward, or to the side.
- d. The pitcher may not pitch the ball behind the back or through the legs.
- e. The pitch shall be released at a moderate speed.
- f. The ball must be delivered with a perceptible arc and reach a height of at least six feet from the ground, while not exceeding twelve feet from the ground.
- g. The pitcher shall not attempt a quick return of the ball before the batter has taken a balanced position in the batter's box.

### **Batting**

#### **A. On-Deck Batter:**

- a. Teams are allowed one on-deck batter at a time.
- b. The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck area in order to direct runners advancing from third base.
- c. The on-deck batter may not interfere with the defensive player's opportunity to make an out.
  - i. If it is when the defensive player is fielding a fly ball, then the batter is out.
  - ii. If there are runners on base, then the runner closest to home plate shall be called out.

#### **B. Batting Order:**

- a. The official batting order is the one that the team turns in to the scorekeeper before the game.
- b. The first batter of each inning shall be the person whose name follows the last person to bat in the previous inning.

- c. The batting order for Co-Rec shall alternate sexes.
- d. Batting out of order is an appeal play that may be made only by the defensive team. The defensive team forfeits its right to appeal once the next pitch, legal or illegal, has been delivered.
  - i. If the appeal is made while the incorrect batter is at bat, then the correct player shall be inserted into the batting position and assume the current count. The offensive team may replace an incorrect batter with the correct one at any time during the at-bat without penalty.
  - ii. If the appeal is made after the incorrect batter has completed a turn at bat:
    - 1. The player who should have batted is out.
    - 2. Any bases or scores earned shall be nullified and those runners returned to their previous spots. An out that is made prior to the appeal remains an out.
    - 3. The next batter shall be the person whose name is on the lineup after the person who was called out.
  - iii. If the error is discovered after the first pitch, legal or illegal, to the next batter, then the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal and any advancements or scores made shall stand. The next batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter on the official lineup.
- e. When the third out of an inning is made before the batter has completed a turn at bat, then that player shall be the first batter in the next inning and the ball and strike count shall be cancelled.

**C. Batter Positioning:**

- a. Prior to the pitch, the batter must have both feet completely within the lines of the batter's box. The batter may touch the lines, but no part of the foot may be outside the lines prior to the pitch.
- b. The batter must take a position in the batter's box within ten seconds of being directed by the umpire. If the batter does not take this position, then the umpire will call a strike. No pitch has to be thrown.
- c. The batter shall not step directly in front of the catcher to the other batter's box if the pitcher is in position to pitch. If this happens, the ball will be dead and the batter will be out.

**D. A Strike Is Called By the Umpire:**

- a. For each legally pitched ball entering the strike zone before touching the ground and if the batter doesn't swing. The strike zone is the area between the batter's shoulders and knees, in relation to home plate. It is not a strike if a pitched ball touches home plate. Any pitched ball that hits the ground or the plate cannot be swung at by the batter. However, if the batter begins his/her swing before the pitch hits the ground or the plate and misses, it is a strike.
- b. For any pitch swung at and missed by the batter.
- c. For each foul ball. If a foul makes the third strike, then the batter is out.
- d. When any part of the batter is touched with a batted ball while still in the batter's box.
- e. When a pitch that is in the strike zone hits a batter that is leaning across the plate.
- f. If the batter does not take a position in the batter's box within ten seconds of being directed to do so by the umpire.

**E. A Ball Is Called By the Umpire:**

- a. For each legally pitched ball that does not enter the strike zone, touches the ground before reaching home plate, or touches home plate, and the batter does not swing. If a batter begins his/her swing after the ball touches the ground in front of home plate or home plate, then a ball shall be called.

- b. For each illegally pitched ball not swung at.
  - c. When the ball hits a batter outside of the strike zone.
- F. The Batter Is Out:**
- a. When the third strike is:
    - i. Swung at and missed.
    - ii. A foul ball.
    - iii. Is not swung at and is in the strike zone.
  - b. When a batter enters the batters box with an illegal or altered bat.
  - c. When an entire foot or both feet are touching the ground outside of the batter's box when the batter makes contact with the ball.
  - d. When any part of the foot is touching home plate when the batter makes contact with the ball.
  - e. When a batter leaves the box, but returns to the box and makes contact with the ball.
  - f. When the batter bunts or chops at the ball.
  - g. When a member of the team at bat interferes with the defensive player's ability to field a fair or foul fly ball.
  - h. When the batter hits a fair ball with the bat a second time in fair territory.
    - i. If the batter hits the ball a second time while still in the batter's box, a foul ball shall be ruled.
    - ii. If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against it in fair territory, and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intent to interfere with the course of the ball, the batter is not out and the ball remains live.
  - i. After the third strike, including a foul ball that is hit after two strikes. If a fly foul ball is caught in playable territory, the ball remains live.
  - j. Whenever the batter due up has left the game under the short-handed rule.
  - k. The batter Shall not:
    - i. Interfere with the catcher, a thrown ball, or play at the plate. The ball will be dead, the batter will be called out, and runners must return to the last base that was touched at the time of interference.

## **Batter-Runner and Runner**

### **A. The Batter Becomes a Runner**

- a. As soon as he/she legally hits a fair ball
- b. When four balls have been called by the umpire. The batter is awarded first base.
  - i. In Co-Rec, a male batter will be awarded two bases. If there are less than two outs, then the following female must bat. If there are two outs, then the next female has the option to either bat or walk.
- c. When the catcher obstructs the batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball.
  - i. The umpire will give a delayed dead ball signal.
  - ii. If the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely and all other runners advance at least one base, then the obstruction is nullified.
  - iii. If all runners, including the batter-runner, do not advance one base, then the offensive team shall have the option of taking the result of the play or having the obstruction enforced by awarding the batter first base and advancing other runner that are forced.

### **B. Batter-Runner Is Out:**

- a. When after hitting a fair ball the batter-runner is legally out prior to reaching base.
- b. When a fly ball is caught by a fielder before it touches the ground or any other object other than another defensive player.

- c. When the batter-runner fails to advance to first base and enters the team area after a batted fair ball, a walk, or catcher obstruction.
- d. When the batter-runner interferes with a fielder.
- e. When the batter-runner steps back toward home plate in attempting to avoid a tag
- f. When an infield fly is declared. The infield fly rule is in effect when at least first and second bases are occupied and there are less than two outs. The ball is live, the batter is declared out, and base runners may advance at their own risk. If the ball is caught in the air, then the players still must tag up in order to legally advance.
- g. When an infielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball which can be caught with ordinary effort with at least first and second base occupied and less than two outs.

**C. Touching the Bases In Legal Order:**

- a. Players must run the bases in legal order (first base, second base, third base, home plate).
- b. When a runner must return to a base, the runner must touch the bases in reverse order.
- c. If a runner dislodges a base, neither that runner nor the succeeding runners are compelled to follow that base.
- d. Two runners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.
  - i. The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to it, unless forced to advance.
- e. No runner may return to touch a base after a succeeding runner has touched that same base.
- f. All awarded bases must be touched in legal order.

**D. Runners Are Entitled To Advance With Liability To Be Put Out:**

- a. When a pitched ball is batted.
- b. On a thrown ball that hits an umpire.
- c. When a legally caught fly ball is first touched by a defensive player.
- d. If, after overrunning first base, the runner attempts to continue to second base.
- e. If, after dislodging a base, a runner attempts to continue to the next base.

**E. Runners Are Entitled To Advance Without Liability To Be Put Out:**

- a. When forced to vacate a base when the batter is awarded a base on balls.
- b. When a fielder not in possession of the ball or not in the act of fielding a ball, impedes the progress of a runner attempting to legally run the bases.
  - i. An obstructed runner may not be called out between the two bases where the obstruction occurred unless properly appealed for:
    - 1. Missing a base
    - 2. Leaving a base early
    - 3. An act of interference
    - 4. If passing another runner
  - ii. If the obstructed runner is put out prior to, in the umpire's judgment, reaching the base which would have been reached had there not been an obstruction.
  - iii. If the obstructed runner is put out after passing the base that would have been reached, then the obstructed runner will be called out and the ball will remain live.
  - iv. When a runner is obstructed, he/she will always be awarded bases that, in the umpire's judgment, would have been reached had the obstruction not occurred.
- c. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded first base.
- d. When a fielder intentionally contacts a fair batted, a thrown, or a pitched ball with anything detached from its proper place on his/her body.

- i. The batter and runners would be awarded three bases from the time of the pitch if a batted ball or two bases from the time of a pitch if a thrown ball.
- e. When the ball is in play and is overthrown into an area that is out of play:
  - i. All runners will be awarded two bases from where they were when the throw was released. If two runners are between the same bases, then the award is based on the position of the lead runner.
  - ii. If a fielder loses possession of a ball, such as in an attempt to tag, and the ball rolls out of play, then each base runner is awarded from the last touched at the time the ball entered the out of play area.
- f. When a fair batted ball strikes the foul pole or clears the fence without touching the ground, all runners, including the batter-runner, shall be awarded home plate.
- g. When a fair batted ball bounces over, rolls under, or goes through the fence, then all runners, including the batter-runner, shall be awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.

**F. A Runner Must Return To His/Her Base:**

- a. When a batted ball is foul.
- b. When a batter-runner is called out for interference.

**G. The Runner Is Out:**

- a. When running to any base and the runner runs more than three feet outside the base path to avoid being tagged.
- b. When not in contact with a base and being tagged by a defender holding the ball.
- c. When, on a force play, a fielder contacts the base while in possession of the ball before the runner reaches the base.
- d. When the runner physically passes or contacts another base runner.
- e. When anyone physically assists the runner while the ball is in play.
- f. When the runner fails to tag up before advancing on a caught fly ball and the play is properly appealed.
- g. When the runner fails to retouch any bases while running in reverse order and the play is properly appealed.
- h. When the batter-runner, who legally overruns first base, attempts to run to second base and is tagged while off the base.
- i. When a runner fails to touch home plate and a fielder properly appeals it.
- j. When the runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or throw a ball.
  - i. If a runner interferes intentionally with a thrown ball, and, in the umpire's judgment, is an obvious attempt to break up a double play, then the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.
- k. When the runner is struck with a fair untouched batted ball while not in contact with a base and before it passes an infielder, other than the pitcher, or if it passes an infielder and any other fielder has an opportunity to make a play.
- l. When the runner intentionally kicks a fair ball that an infielder has missed.
- m. When the runner fails to keep contact with the base to which they are entitled until a pitched ball is batted.
- n. When a runner abandons a base and enters a team area or leaves the field of play.

**H. Runner Is Not Out:**

- a. When a runner runs outside of the base path to allow a fielder a chance to play the ball.
- b. When a runner is hit with a fair, untouched ball that has passed an infielder, other than the pitcher, and, in the umpire's judgment, no other fielder had a chance to make a play.

- c. When a runner is hit by a batted ball over foul territory.
- d. When the runner is hit by a fair, touched ball.
- e. When a runner is touched off base :
  - i. With a ball not securely held by a fielder.
  - ii. With a hand or glove of a defensive player and the ball is not in contact with the hand or glove.
- f. When a batter-runner overruns first bases and returns directly to it.
- g. When the runner tags up after a fielder has touched a fly ball.
- h. When hit by a batted ball while in contact with a base.
- i. When the runner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper position.
- j. When a player legally returns to a base left too soon or missed prior to a proper appeal.

## **Protests**

- A. Protests will be allowed for participant eligibility and for misapplications of rules. Judgment calls may never be protested.
  - a. Participant Eligibility: When a person is believed to be ineligible to participate in an intramural contest, the protesting team's captain or manager must notify the game officials of the eligibility question at the start of the game or when the player in question arrives at the game site. Protests made after these deadlines will not be heard.
  - b. Misapplication of Rules: When a participant believes that a game official has misapplied or misinterpreted a published playing rule, the respective team's captain or manager must notify the game officials of the protest before the next pitch, legal or illegal. If the decision in question happens to be the final play of the game, the protesting team must file a protest with the event supervisor before leaving the facility. Protests made after these deadlines will not be heard.