

Port Coquitlam Recreational Slo-Pitch League
League Rulebook (2025 Spring Season)



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City of Port Coquitlam Parks & Rec Slo-Pitch League

This league roughly follows Slo-pitch National rules. The rules outlined here either explain SPN rules or supersede them in a case where our rule differs from the standard SPN rule.

Team captains and designated umpires are required to know the rules and should review them with their team members prior to all games.

Section 1 – Field Equipment and Set-up/Post Game

1-1) Field Setup – The designated home team is responsible for setting up the field with their own equipment prior to the game. The required field equipment consists of the following:

1-1a) Home Plate Strike Mat

- i) The required Home Plate Strike mat is a 24-inch by 36-inch wooden board.
- ii) The home plate strike mat should be placed on top of the existing home plate. The front edge of the home plate strike mat should align with the front edge of the existing home plate.

1-1b) First Base Safety Base - A one piece - two-sided safety base must be used at first base. The white portion of the safety base should be entirely in fair territory and the orange portion of the safety base should be entirely in foul territory.

1-1c) Second and Third Base - Standard bases should be used at second and third base.

1-1d) Base Spikes – Both sides of the first base safety bag must be spiked down with the white portion spiked down in fair territory and the orange portion spiked down in foul territory. Second and Third bases must also be spiked down.

1-1e) Base Path Distance – The base paths should be 65 feet between each base.

1-1f) Scoring Line – The scoring line is to be marked from the left front corner of the home plate strike mat to the back stop. The line should be drawn perpendicular to the third base line.

1-1g) Commitment Line – The commitment line is to be marked 20 feet up the 3rd base line from the scoring line. The line should run from the left front corner of the home plate mat to the back stop. The line should be drawn perpendicular to the third base line.

1-2) Post Game Field Raking – Both teams are responsible for raking the field after their games, especially those teams that are playing the final game on a given day. Raking should focus on the batters boxes, the pitching area and along the base paths.

Section 2 – Legal Equipment

2-1) Official Game Ball – Worth Hot Dot.

2-2) Approved / Non-Approved Bats – Please consult the SPN web site for a list of approved and non-approved bats.

2-3) Shoes – Closed toes shoes are required, and cleats are highly recommended. Cleats with metal spikes of any sort of metal attachment may not be used. Any player wearing illegal shoes should be asked to change into a legal shoe and failing to do so will result in the player in question being removed from the game.

3-4) Gloves – All players may wear a glove or mitt of any size, including a “trapper” style glove.

3-5) Helmets – Helmets for batters/base runners are not mandatory but highly recommended for safety purposes.

Section 3 – The Game

3-1) Fitness of the Field – Prior to the designated start time, and at any time during play, it is the responsibility of the two team captains to determine whether the field is in suitable condition to play the game. If at any time either captain determines that the field is unplayable the game shall be called.

3-1a) Official Game - If 5 innings have been played (4 1/2 innings if the home team is leading) the game will be considered official and the score at the end of the last completed inning will be the final score. No make-up game will be scheduled.

3-1b) Non-Official Game - If less than the minimum number of innings have been played the game shall be called with no result reported. All efforts will be made to schedule a make-up game that will be played from the beginning of the 1st inning.

3-2) Umpires – The team at bat is responsible for providing a home plate umpire. The designated umpire must understand the league and SPN rules and must not be under the influence of any intoxicating substance.

3-3) Game Length – Each regular season game will be seven (7) innings in length. Ties are a valid result during the regular season so no extra innings should be played.

3-4) Run Limit Per Inning - There is a maximum of five (5) runs per inning, except for the final inning, which will be an open inning.

3-5) Game Management – Each team is responsible for being ready to play at the scheduled start time and at all times during the game. All efforts should be made to ensure batters are ready when they are due up and fielders are ready when they are slated to play a defensive position.

3-6) A Forfeited Game – A team will forfeit the game under one of the following circumstances:

a) A team fails to appear at the field with a legal roster within 15 minutes of the designated start time.

b) A team refuses to begin the game at the designated start time despite a legal roster being present.

c) Prior to the designated start time, or at any time during play, a team does not have the minimum number of players required to play.

Section 4 – Team Rosters

4-1) Minimum Roster Requirements - Each team must field a minimum of 10 players with at least 4 of those players being female, with the following exception:

a) A team may play with only 9 players, if necessary, but under the following limitations:

i) If the missing 10th player is female the spot in the batting order that the missing female player would have held will result in an automatic out each time that spot comes up in the order.

ii) If the missing 10th player is male the team may bat only 9 players with no penalty.

iii) A team playing with only 9 players can only have 9 defensive players in the field. The defensive spot left open by the missing player cannot be filled by a member of the opposite sex.

4-2) Minimum Player In-Game Requirements – All players listed on the batting order must play a minimum of one (1) inning in the field and must have a minimum of one (1) at bat during the game.

It is the responsibility of the opposing team to track this requirement and inform the opposing team of their belief that the requirement has not been met prior to the beginning of the inning prior to the open inning (usually the 6th inning). If the requirement has not been met and the offending team has been notified, they must insert the player in question into a defensive position for a full inning and also into the batting order in a spot that ensures they will receive one at-bat prior to the end of the game (ie. one of the three upcoming spots).

EFFECT – If a team has been notified by the opposition that they have not yet met this requirement for all their players but does not remedy the situation as per the rules above the offending team will lose the game by forfeit.

4-3) Playoff Tournament Eligibility – To be eligible to play in the playoff tournament at the end of the Spring 2020 season a player must have played in a minimum of five (5) regular season games.

4-4) Defensive Position Substitutions

a) Unlimited Rule - Defensive players can be substituted in or out at will if they are listed individually on the batting order (ie. not sharing a batting order spot with another player).

or...

- b) Substitution Rule - Two players may “share” a spot in the batting order with one replacing the other at some point in the game in the batting order. In this case the player removed from the batting order and replaced with another player cannot bat or play in the field for the remainder of the game.

Please note that both players sharing a batting order spot must meet the requirements laid out in rule 4.2 above.

4-5) Sparing/Pick-up's

- a) A male player may spare on any team that is no more than one division lower than his own primary team.
- b) A female player may spare on any team in any division, regardless of the division or her primary team.

Section 5 – Pitching

5-1) Pitching Zone - The pitcher must deliver each pitch from a 2-foot-wide zone located between 50 and 65 feet from the front edge of the Home Plate Strike Mat.

5-2) Pitcher Motions Allowed in Actual Delivery of Pitch – The pitcher must deliver the ball from a standing position and the windup must be in a continuous motion and may not include a stop or reversal of the pitching motion. The pitcher must release the ball on the first forward motion of the pitching arm.

EFFECT - The pitch shall be called a "No Pitch" by the umpire. The play is considered dead and neither a strike or ball will be awarded.

5-3) Pitcher Movements After Pitching – After the release of the pitch, which action may include a step forward towards the batter, the pitcher may not continue to move forward, other than the normal forward momentum resultant from the pitch to the batter.

EFFECT - If the pitcher continues to move forward to distract the batter, on the first offence, the pitcher shall be warned. On the second offence, the pitcher shall be ejected from the game and the batter awarded first base.

5-4) Quick Pitching – The pitcher may not quick pitch with the intent of catching a batter off guard or off balance.

EFFECT – The pitch shall be called a “No Pitch” by the umpire. The play is considered dead and neither a strike nor ball will be awarded.

5-5) Legal Pitch Height – The pitched ball must have a perceptible arc of at least 6 feet from the ground before it passes any part of home plate / strike mat and shall not reach a height of more than 12 feet at its highest point from the ground.

EFFECT – Any pitch that does not reach 6 feet in height or exceeds 12 feet in height shall be called “illegal” by the umpire and a ball shall be awarded to the batter. However, if the batter swings at a called illegal pitch the pitch will immediately become legal and, if hit, the ball is alive.

5-4) Called Strike – A legally delivered pitch that hits ANY PORTION of the Home Plate Strike Mat is a strike.

5-5) Called Ball – A legally delivered pitch the does not hit any portion of the Home Plate Strike Mat is a ball. Note that this includes pitches that strike the ground first and then hit the front edge of the Home Plate Strike Mat.

Section 6 – Batting

6-1) Male/Female Batting Order Ratio – The batting order may not have more than three (3) male batters in a row. This includes the turnover from the bottom of the batting order to the top of the batting order.

6-2) Batting Order

a) There is no limit to the number of players that can be listed on the batting order, provided the batting order follows Rule 6-1 (no more than 3 male batters hitting in a row).

b) The batting order is set at the start of the game and cannot be changed once the game has started, with the following exception:

i) A late arriving player may be added to the bottom of the batting order if that addition does not result in more than 3 male batters hitting in a row.

6-3) On Deck Batter – The on-deck batter must stand outside the dugout with a bat in their hand for the pitcher to know who bats next in the order. No other player should stand outside the dugout while holding a bat.

6-4) Starting Count on a New Batter – All new batters start with a 0-0 count.

6-5) A batter is called out if:

a) He or she enter the batter's box with an illegal or altered bat. In addition, if the bat is deemed to be altered the player will also be ejected from the game.

b) A male batter deliberately bunts.

c) He or she swings the bat in a downward “slap” or “chops” the ball to the ground.

d) He or she intentionally interferes with the catcher attempting to make a play.

e) He or she hits a fair ball or line drive that a fielder intentionally drops with forced runners on base and less than two outs. The other base runners return to the base they occupied prior to the play.

6-6) Two and a Half Strike Rule – If a player has two strikes and they hit a foul ball the umpire shall call 2-1/2 strikes and the player will continue as the batter. If the player with 2-1/2 strikes hits another foul ball they shall then be called out.

6-7) Bunting – Only female players may bunt.

a) Bunting Foul with Two Strike Rule – If a female player attempts to bunt with two strikes in the count and bunts the ball foul she will be called out. The 2-1/2 Strike Rule does not apply in this case.

6-8) Four Ball Walk to a Male – A male batter with a female batter following him in the batting order is walked on a 4-0 count he will be awarded second base. Please note that this is only if four straight balls are called from the beginning of the at bat.

a) If there are less than two outs the following female batter must hit.

b) If there are two outs the following female batter has the option of hitting or being awarded 1st base.

6-9) No Verbal Intentional Walks – This league does not follow the SPN rule where a batter may be walked intentionally by the pitcher indicating to the umpire that they want to walk the batter.

6-10) Batted Ball Hitting Home Plate Mat – Any batted ball that strikes the home plate mat will be called a dead ball and a strike will be called.

6-11) Running Out Home Runs – The batter must touch all bases in the proper order after an over the fence home run. All on base runners must proceed forward and touch all bases still in front of them in the proper order.

6-12) Gates Park Home Run Rule – Each team is allowed a maximum of two over the fence home runs per game.

a) Any home run hit after a team has reached the maximum of two home runs will result in the batter being called out and any base runners will stay on the base they were on when the at bat started.

b) An over the fence home run is considered any untouched ball hit directly over the fence. If a ball is deflected by a defensive player over the fence the batter will be awarded four bases but this is not considered an over the fence home run and is not counted towards the team's total home run count.

c) Inside the park home runs are not counted towards the maximum home run rule.

6-12) Aggie Park Home Run Rule – Games at Aggie Park will be played under the +2 progressive home run rule where each team must stay within two over the fence home runs of each other.

a) Any home run hit that results in a team totalling 3 home runs more than the opposing team will result in the batter being called out and any base runners will stay on the base they were on when the at bat started.

b) An over the fence home run is considered any untouched ball hit directly over the fence. If a ball is deflected by a defensive player over the fence the batter will be awarded four bases but this is not considered an over the fence home run and is not counted towards the teams total home run count.

c) Inside the park home runs are not counted towards the maximum home run rule.

6-13) Cedar Park Home Run Rule – As there is no fence at Cedar Park there is no maximum home run rule.

a) Any ball that lands in or rolls into the trees in left field at Cedar Park shall be considered a home run.

6-14) McLean Park Home Run Rule – As there are no fences at McLean Park there is no maximum home run rule.

Section 7 – Base Running

7-1) Leading Off – The base runners foot should not lose contact with the bag until contact has been made with the ball by a batter. There are no exceptions to this rule. If a base runner loses contact with the base with no contact being made by the batter the base runner shall be called out.

7-2) Sliding

a) Sliding is permitted at 2nd and 3rd base with the intent of avoiding collisions between fielders and runners. Avoiding a tag is a secondary reason to permit a slide and not one to be taken at the expense of safety.

b) Sliding at 1st base and home plate is not allowed. If any player slides into first base or at home plate they shall be called out.

c) Sliding back to a base is allowed.

d) Sliding with the intent of trying to break up a play will not be permitted and will result in the base runner being called out. Aggressive sliding where it appears that the runner slid into a base with the intent of dislodging the ball from the fielder's glove, in anger or with the intent to injure shall result in the player being ejected from the game and subsequent disciplinary action may be taken.

7-3) Courtesy Runners

- a) A courtesy runner may be taken from any base that a player has reached without being put out.
- b) A male player may only be used as a courtesy runner for another male player but a female player may be used as a courtesy runner for either a male or female player.
- c) The same player may not be used twice as a courtesy runner with the following exception:
 - i) If all of the available female courtesy runners have been used once as a courtesy runner for another female player they may be used for a second time.
- d) A courtesy runner may be used for a courtesy runner.
- e) If a courtesy runner is on base and there are no additional courtesy runners available to take their place when their spot in the batting order comes up an out shall be declared.

7-4) Commitment Line – A runner advancing towards home plate from third base that touches on or beyond the commitment line MUST proceed towards home plate and cannot turn back towards third base. A runner that has passed the commitment line cannot be tagged out.

7-5) Scoring Line – A runner that touches on or beyond the scoring line prior to a defensive player touching the Home Plate Strike Mat while holding the ball shall be declared safe. If a defensive player touches the Home Plate Strike Mat while holding the ball before the runner touches or crosses the Scoring Line the runner shall be called out.

7-6) Touching or Crossing Over Home Plate – Any runner who touches, runs over top of or jumps over home plate while trying to score a run shall be called out. All runners should attempt to cross the scoring line as far away from home plate as possible to avoid any potential collisions with the catcher.

Section 8 – Fielding

8-1) Minimum Infielder Distance – No infield player (other than the catcher) may take a position on the infield closer than 50 feet from the Home Plate Strike Mat prior to the batter making contact with the ball.

8-2) Minimum Outfielder Distance – No outfield player, including the rover, may stand on the infield dirt area prior to the batter contacting a pitched ball.

8-3) Outfielder Throwing to 1st Base – No outfield player, including the rover, may throw directly to 1st Base to put the batter out. This rule is in place for all batters.