

# **Halifax Commons Coed Softball Rules**

## **Equipment/Field Set-Up:**

Teams are responsible to bring their own gloves and bats.

The home team will be responsible to bring the balls (3 recommended) and bases; the bases are to be set up prior to the start of the games.

The use of wooden bats is not permitted in this league. Only bats that conform with the guidelines of Slow Pitch National (SPN) with respect to approved bats and the Amateur Softball Association Non-Approved bat list, may be used.

## **Game Time/Default:**

Please arrive 15 minutes early so that you can start your games on time.

Games are 7 innings in length with a time limit of 1.25 hours. A default will occur if any team cannot field a squad by 15 minutes after the official start time.

1. The team that is losing at the top of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning should bat first, whether or not they are the visiting team. This rule is to ensure that the games can be completed on time.
2. Games that are forced to be cut short due to time or dangerous playing conditions (ie. weather) will end with the final score being the score at the end of the last completed inning.
3. No new inning can start with 5 minutes left before the formal end time.
4. During playoffs, if the game is tied after the completion of 7 innings, or the expired time, teams will utilize the following format. The team that is up to bat will start the inning by placing their 'last out' from the previous inning on 2nd base, with 2 outs. Once 3 outs have been reached, the other team will then place their 'last out' from the previous inning on 2nd base (also with 2 outs) and proceed to bat until 3 outs is reached. Teams will take turns doing this until the score is settled upon the completion of a full inning.
5. Teams are comprised of nine (9) players (1 rover) with a minimum of three (3) players of each gender. A team can play with a minimum of 7 people, as long as there are two (2) players of each gender. A team can also play with 8 people if they only have two players of one gender (i.e. 2 women), BUT a team of 9 or more players that only has two women can only have 8 players on defense (you will be playing 1 person short on defense).

## General Rules:

6. The visiting team will bat first.
7. **The rover may play anywhere on the field but must start with both feet in the outfield (grass) before the ball is hit.**
8. Each inning is played with 3 outs or when a team scores a maximum of five (5) runs. EXCEPTION: A team has no run limit in the final inning of the game.
9. 1st base and home plate will have "safety bases". As such, there will be a base for the first basemen and the catcher to touch and a separate base for the runner to step on. For the other bases, fielders should be touching 1 side of the base allowing a baserunner to touch the base without interference. **There is absolutely no sliding. Any base runner that slides is automatically out.**
10. A player can overrun 1st base without being tagged out if they continue to follow the foul line or stay to the right of it.
11. Runners are allowed to take one or two steps after second and third base, BUT if the runner continues to over run second or third as they would to first base they will be called out.
12. There is a "commit-line" halfway between 3rd base and home plate marked with an extra base. Once the runner has crossed this line, they cannot return to 3rd base. If they do, it is an automatic out.
13. A "force out" will always be in effect between 3rd base and home plate. To avoid contact a runner may not be tagged out between the "commit line" and home plate. Once the player crosses the "commit line", the defensive team may only touch home plate to achieve an out. If the runner is tagged between the commit line and home plate they will be declared safe.
14. The team at bat provides their own pitcher. The pitcher can pitch from wherever they choose. If a hit ball touches the pitcher, the ball is declared dead and the pitch is redone – base runners return to their previous bases and the pitch count is restored. (Pitchers should do their best to avoid making contact with a hit ball).
15. Every batter can receive a maximum of three (3) pitches. All foul balls, wild pitches, strikes and balls count as one of the three pitches. The only exception is a ball that hits the pitcher (see rule 14).

16. There is no bunting or faking to bunt. However, a ball that is hit with a full swing, but does not go past the pitcher is a live, playable ball.
17. The batting order is two (2) men followed by one (1) woman - but teams that have more women than men can alter this format. The male order and female order must always stay the same, although the order when mixed may change depending on the male/female ratio. A team must use their full roster for batting (i.e. players cannot only play defense), and all players must bat before a player of the same gender can bat for the second time (this may change the male/female order). If a team only has two women present, the batting order will be 2 men, woman A, 2 men, woman B, 2 men, woman A etc. The spot where woman C should have been will NOT be an automatic out. The batting order should remain intact from inning to inning. Any players arriving after their team has batted in the first inning, will be inserted into the bottom of the gender batting order. The first player to bat in an inning is the person following the player who recorded the last at bat from the previous inning.
18. Mercy rule: If a team is up by 15 runs or more after the 5th inning of play, the losing team has the option of calling the game or choosing to continue.
19. There are no leadoffs for base runners; you must wait until the batter makes contact with the ball before the runner leaves the base.
20. The batting team will supply one player/coach to be the designated umpire for that half inning (this person can be subbed out if needed). This person needs to be standing in the field of play but does not need to stand behind the back catcher. The designated umpire will call all fair/ foul balls, and safe/outs at ALL bases. The designated umpire cannot be the pitcher. The designated umpire can assist their team with running the bases and strategy, but it must not interfere with their primary focus of calling the game. Teams may choose to have base coaches if they wish, however it will no longer be mandatory. Please do your best to ensure that the game is being called in a fair manner.
21. A 'foul ball' pop-up behind home plate can only be caught for an out, if it goes higher than **(8 feet)**. A ball not exceeding this height, is considered a 'strike'.
22. Players on base are allowed to "tag-up" on a pop fly. Base runners must not leave the base until the fielder has caught the ball.
23. There is no "infield-fly" rule in effect. However, it is poor sportsmanship to purposely drop a ball to try and get a double play.

24. If a ball is overthrown at 1st or 3rd base and goes "out of play" - which is over the fence, into the dugout, beyond the extended backstop ect., then the base runners can advance one base. If the ball stays in play (hits fence, etc) then the ball is live, and the runners can advance at their own risk.
25. Baserunners must stay along the base paths. They cannot move more than 3 feet away from an imaginary line or they will be deemed out.
26. Pinch runners should only be pinch runner if the batter is injured. They are only allowed to substitute for a player once the batter has reached first base.
27. Players in the field are not allowed to stand inside the baselines before a player attempts to hit a ball. ie. Shortstop can't come up and stand beside pitcher before batter has swung at ball.
28. No metal cleats are allowed.
29. A homerun rule will only be in affect when playing on a field that has a fence.

HOME RUN RULE - "Match Plus Two": At no time during a game will the number of over the fence homeruns (untouched) allowed hit by one team, be more than two (2) above the number hit by the opposing team. Any homerun in excess of two (2), and the batter will be declared out.

### **Ground Rules:**

30. Captains should decide prior to the start of the game if they are going to play any ground rules with regards to boundaries. Please make sure that both teams are aware of these rules.

### **Rough Play:**

31. ANY ROUGH OR PHYSICAL PLAY WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE EXPULSION FROM FURTHER LEAGUE PLAY AND MAY RESULT IN LIFETIME LEAGUE EXPULSION.

All players should go out of their way to avoid creating an unsafe play. This rule supersedes all others.