

## **Whitworth Intramural Softball Rules**

**Current ASA slow pitch rules will be enforced unless exceptions are noted:**

**1. General**

- a. Games will be played at Holmberg Park on Wall Street (unless otherwise noted before game time). Referees will be at the field approximately 20 minutes before game time with all the equipment necessary.
- b. Teams will begin the check-in process facilitated by IM referees 3 minutes prior to the start of game time. If the captains are not ready to play, (ex: min. roster requirement not met) the team captain has 10 minutes to be ready to play. At this time, a forfeit will be enforced. See Section 7 of the Whitworth Intramural handbook for more details. Remember, only paid/registered players may participate in Intramural sports.
- c. Whitworth intramurals will provide the umpires for the games. The umpires are in charge of all calls made during the game.
- d. Field preparation is provided by the Spokane County parks and recreation services. Referees and IM staff are in charge of determining whether the field will be playable. The information regarding field conditions will be transmitted by twitter, email as well as on the IM leagues softball page. Captains are responsible for disseminating information to their teammates.
- e. "play 10 bat 12"
  - i. Only 10 players max may play defense, however all 12 people on the roster are eligible to hit.

**2. The Playing field**

- a. The softball field we utilize will be raked and chalked by Spokane county P&R before most games. This means field dimensions will remain static.
- b. Umpires will establish the ground rules for Holmberg Park during the pregame captains meeting.

**3. Equipment**

- a. Referees will provide a gear bag with gloves (R and L) softballs, softball bats and dropdown bases if necessary. You may bring your own gloves, balls, and softball bats.
  - i. In order for a bat to be deemed legal, it must be an official A.S.A. approved softball bat. It must have a safety grip (no smooth tape) and must be free of rough or sharp edges. Baseball bats and fungo bats are illegal. Use of an illegal bat will result in ejection.
- b. Closed-toed shoes required. Molded plastic/rubber cleats are legal and recommended. Metal spikes are illegal!

**4. Players and substitutes**

- a. Varsity baseball and softball players are ineligible to play intramural softball. Teams are responsible for checking the eligibility of their players and should consult the Intramural Sports Articles of Eligibility for the requirements.
- b. A team must have 6 players present to start the game. Teams playing shorthanded will not be assessed outs for empty spots in the batting order. Players arriving late may have their name added to the bottom of the order.

- c. Teams are allowed a minimum of 6 players and a maximum of 12 players. Only 10 players may play in the field at a time!
  - d. **Blood Rule.** A player who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has blood on the uniform shall be considered an injured player. Such players may not return to the game until the bleeding has stopped and the wound properly covered, and soiled clothing has been changed or treated with a bleach disinfectant. The umpire and/or staff assistant on duty shall determine a reasonable amount of time to get the wound covered and the bleeding stopped so that the player does not have to substitute out of the game.
  - e. "Shorthanded Rule." If a player must leave the game and there is no substitute available, when it is that player's turn to bat an out is declared. If a runner must leave the game and there is no substitute available, the runner will be declared out.
  - f. The A.S.A. re-entry rule will apply. A starter may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered in the same spot in the batting order once. Players may not re-enter a second time, and the starter and the substitute may not be in the game at the same time. To bat an Extra Hitter (EH), a team must have 11 players present at the start of the game.
5. The Game
- a. Games are 7 innings. In the event of rain or darkness, games can be called after 5 innings, or 4 ½ innings.
  - b. Mercy Rule: 20 runs after 3 innings. 15 after 5 innings.
  - c. No new innings after 1 hour prior to game time has elapsed. Unless a playoff game or there is no game scheduled immediately following the current matchup.
  - d. Home/away will be given on the IM leagues Rec it admin application.
  - e. Base stealing is not allowed. All runners must have one foot on the bag until the ball crosses the plate and must return immediately on a ball not hit by the batter.
  - f. Bunting is illegal. Any attempt to bunt will result in an automatic out.
  - g. YOU PITCH TO YOUR OWN TEAM
  - h. The ball must be pitched at a height of no less than 6 feet off the ground and no higher than 12 feet off the ground.
  - i. A ball that does not meet the above requirements may either be deemed an illegal pitch by the umpire, which will result in a ball, however if the batter swings and misses, the result will be a strike.
  - j. The batter starts with a 0-0 count
  - k. There are no walks. On ball 4 the ball count will reset, strikes will stay the same.
  - l. There is no foul out rule. Only if the ball is popped up to a height greater than 6 feet will the ball be deemed live and catchable for an out at the referee's discretion.
  - m. The ball is dead and not in play:
    - i. When no pitch is declared.
    - ii. When a foul ball is not caught.
    - iii. When a runner is called out for leaving a base too soon.
    - iv. When offensive interference occurs.
    - v. When a defensive player carries the ball out of play.
  - n. The ball is in play:
    - i. When the infield fly rule is enforced.
    - ii. When a thrown ball remains in playable territory.
    - iii. When a base is dislodged while base runners are progressing around the bases.
    - iv. When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.
    - v. When a thrown ball or fair-batted ball strikes an umpire.

- o. The ball remains in play until the pitcher has the ball or the umpire calls time at the request of a defensive player.
- 6. Batting
  - a. The batter is out when:
    - i. The batter appears in the batter's box and is discovered using an illegal bat.
    - ii. A batter receives his/her third strike.
    - iii. The umpire declares an infield fly rule. This occurs when an infield popup (a ball any infielder can easily catch with ordinary effort) is hit with 2 runners on base with less than 2 outs. The umpire will declare the infield fly rule and that the batter is out.
    - iv. A fielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball that can be caught by an infielder, with ordinary effort, with first and second or first, second, and third bases occupied with less than 2 outs. The ball is dead and all runners return to the base they occupied at the time the ball was pitched.
    - v. The batter bunts or chops the ball downward. The ball is dead and all runners return to the base they occupied when the ball was pitched.
    - vi. When any foot touches the ground completely outside the batter's box or if any part of the foot touches the plate and the ball is hit fair or foul.
- 7. Runner/ Batter runner
  - a. There is always a force at 1<sup>st</sup> base because the batter HAS to advance from home plate. The batter becomes a runner once they put the ball in play.
  - b. On a ball hit on the ground, with a runner on first, there is a force out at second base as well as first base. The force at second is caused by the fact that since the batter has become a runner, the runner at first must advance to second base because one runner can occupy a base at a time.
  - c. On a ball hit in the air, the runner is only required to advance if the ball lands on the ground without being caught. A fly ball that is caught requires that the base runner tag up. Tagging up means that the runner must touch the base they were on before the ball was caught, and then they are free to advance at their own risk.
  - d. ABSOLUTELY NO COLLISIONS.
    - i. If the defensive player is in possession of the game, a runner may not run into the defender in any attempt to dislodge the ball. This action will result in immediate ejection.
    - ii. If the defender is not in possession of the ball, they must yield the base path to the base runner. Failure to yield the base path will result in an obstruction call, and the base runner will advance.
  - e. Base runners are entitled to advance but accept the liability to be put out under the following circumstances:
    - i. When the ball is overthrown into fair or foul territory and remains in play.
    - ii. When the ball is batted into fair territory.
    - iii. When a runner tags up on a legally caught fly ball. If the runner leaves early, the defense may appeal at the runner's original base for an out.
  - f. Base runners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out under the following circumstances:
    - i. When a fielder obstructs the base runner from making a base, unless the fielder is trying to field the batted ball or has the ball ready to touch the base runner.
    - ii. When the ball is in play and is overthrown and goes out of play, all runners advance 2 bases from where they were when the ball left the thrower's hand.

- g. Obstruction: When a defensive player hinders or prevents the batter's ability to hit a pitched ball OR when a fielder not in possession of the ball impedes the runner's ability to advance or does not yield the base path to the baserunner.
  - h. Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member, umpire, or spectator that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Contact is not necessary for interference to be called.
  - i. The baserunner is out when:
    - i. The runner is tagged off the base while the ball is in play.
    - ii. In running to any base he/she runs more than three feet from a direct line between a base and the next base when a defensive player is attempting to tag the runner.
    - iii. The base runner passes a preceding baserunner, before that runner has been put out.
    - iv. The baserunner legally over runs 1<sup>st</sup> base and makes an attempt for second and is then tagged while off base. The base runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the umpire's judgment, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play (including shouting or waving the arms to distract the defense), the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.
    - v. The base runner is struck with a fairly batted ball while off base and before it passes an infielder who could have otherwise made a play.
    - vi. With a runner on third, the batter or any offensive player interferes with a play being made at home plate.
    - vii. In the umpire's judgment, the base coach at first or third base touches or holds the runner physically to assist a runner in returning to or advancing from the base when a play is being made on him/her.
    - viii. A runner, after being declared out or after scoring, interferes with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out.
  - j. Base runners are NOT out under the following circumstances:
    - i. When a base runner runs around the fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.
    - ii. When a base runner is hit with a ball that fair ball that has been passed by a fielder and by the umpire's judgement, no other fielder is in position to field the ball. The ball remains "alive".
    - iii. When a base runner is hit by a fair batted ball after it is touched or touches any fielder.
    - iv. When a base runner is hit by a fair batted ball while in contact with a base.
    - v. Injured runner: If an accident to the runner prevents him/her from proceeding in the game, they may be replaced by a substitute. If none are available, the runner will be declared out.
- 8. Protests
- 9. Ejection Policy