

2009-10 SOFTBALL RULES

All participants must have & show their valid KENT STATE UNIVERSITY ID before the start of every game. Anyone without an ID will not be allowed to participate. No exceptions.

All games will be officiated based on the *National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) Rules*; which will be in effect unless otherwise noted in this supplement.

THE GAME

- A regulation game is five (5) innings. There will be no time limitations.
- A Ten (10) Run Rule will be in effect during all games. A game will be called by the 10-Run Rule after four complete innings. If the home team is winning by 10 runs after the top of the 4th inning is completed, the game will be ended at that point.
- Four full innings needs to be completed for a game to be called final. Only the top of the 4th inning needs completed if the home team is winning. This may be the case for inclement weather.
- In cases of inclement weather, the Intramural office will decide on the field conditions 1/2 hour before the scheduled start of play. Once play begins for the day, the Coordinator or Assistant Director of Intramural Sports will decide when games are to be canceled. Teams should not immediately leave the area, but should remain close by in case the games can be continued.
- Every effort will be made to reschedule all games cancelled due to inclement weather; however, if games cannot be made up then a teams' record for qualification for post season play will only reflect completed games. Refunds will not be given for shortened seasons due to inclement weather.
- Games that end in a tie at the end of regulation will remain a tie during the regular season.
- Home and away will be determined at the beginning of the game using a coin flip for all regular season games. For the playoffs, the team with the higher seed will have the choice of home or away if the Grace Period rule is not used.

PLAYERS

- A team shall consist of 10 fielders, but may start the game with 8 players.
- A team may bat up to 11 players (*co-rec up to 12*), and must finish the game with at least 8 players.
 - *Outs will not be taken at the end of the line-up if a team starts short-handed.*
- Players may be added up to the tenth batter at any time during the game. However, an extra hitter (EH) may not be added once the game has started.
- If a team does not have a substitute for a player who leaves the game for any reason, an automatic out must be taken in that players batting slot.
- If a team drops below 8 players for any reason the game will be declared a forfeit.

GRACE PERIOD

- Teams will be allowed a maximum five (5) minute grace period for the first game of a double header. The team that is on time (on the field and signed in on the score sheet by the starting time) will be awarded the decision of home or away, and they will receive 2 runs. Games using the Grace Period will become a timed game with no new innings starting 50 minutes past the original game time.
- If both teams are late, but within the grace period, the game will begin with a score of 0-0 with the timing restrictions.
 - NOTE: Both teams must still be signed in and on the field no later than five (5) minutes after the original starting time.
- If both teams are not signed in with the minimum number of players required to start the game after the five-minute grace period, the game will be called and scored a double-forfeit.
- If a team forfeits the first game of a double header, the second game of the double header will also be declared a forfeit unless the forfeiting team is at the fields and indicates that they will have enough players for the 2nd game of the double header. There will be no grace period for the 2nd game.

- Forfeited games will be scored 7-0.

EQUIPMENT

- Each team manager or captain must check out equipment for his/her team. The equipment is to be checked out from the equipment room at Allerton Fields. A current FLASHCARD ID is required to check out equipment. **NO OTHER FORMS OF IDENTIFICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED.**
- Metal spikes are **NOT PERMITTED** to be worn at any time. If spiked shoes are worn, they must be one-pieced molded rubber or plastic.
- Sandals, dress shoes and boots are not permitted.
- Metal knee braces of any kind must be covered.
- Only ASA approved bats are permitted in intramural play and must have the ASA stamp embossed on the bat. For a ruling on the legality of a bat, please see the Coordinator or Assistant Director of Intramural Sports.
- All bats must be free from any visible deformities. Any bat that is altered, has a visible deformity, or found to be non-approved may be removed from the game by the umpire or Intramural Supervisor.
- All bats suspected of being altered or non-approved by the umpire or Intramural Supervisor may be removed from play immediately. Play may continue without the bat. The bat may not be used until approved by the umpire or supervisor.
- Bats that do not have clear markings as to the model and bat specifications will not be permitted to be used.
- No baseball bats are permitted at any time!
- Titanium bats are not permitted in intramural play.
- For each participant's safety, the following pieces of jewelry will not be permitted to be worn during games:
 - Hoop earrings
 - Rings
 - Watches
 - Eyebrow rings, etc.
- However, participants may wear the following pieces of jewelry: stud earrings and necklaces (which must remain tucked inside the shirt).

SCOREKEEPING & LINE UPS

- Players who arrive late to the game must check in with the scorekeeper at the end of the half inning. He/she will not be permitted to play until after checking in.
- The team manager will be responsible for making sure that all his/her players check in (valid KSU Flash Card) with the scorekeeper.
- The team manager should have the teams' lineup cards submitted to the umpire five (5) minutes prior to game time.
- Teams are responsible for the accuracy of the score. It is suggested that the captains verify the score regularly.
- Any scoring discrepancies must be brought to the umpires' attention prior to the first legal pitch of the next half inning or the score will stand as it is.

PLAYING RULES

1. Pitching

- The pitcher shall take a position with one or both feet firmly on the ground and in contact with the pitcher's rubber.
- This position must be maintained at least one second and not more than ten seconds before taking one hand off the ball.
- The pitcher's arm must come to rest holding the ball in front of the body, with a pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate.
- The ball must be delivered toward home plate on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the pitched ball is released.
- There is no restriction on the position or movement of the free foot except that if a step is taken, it must be toward home plate.
- The ball must be delivered underhand at moderate speed.

- The ball must be delivered with a perceptible arc of at least 6 feet from the ground but no more than 12 feet at its highest point from the ground. Speed and height are left solely to the judgment of the umpire.
 - EFFECT -- (1. A - H) Any infraction of (1. A - H) is an illegal pitch. The umpire shall call a ball on the batter and base runners do not advance.
 - EXCEPTION: If a batter swings at any illegal pitch after the umpire has called the pitch illegal, it shall be a live ball and there shall be no penalty for such an illegal pitch. The ball shall remain in play if hit by the batter. If an illegal pitch is called during an appeal play, the appeal is canceled.
- No pitch shall be declared when:
 - The pitcher pitches during suspension of play.
 - The pitcher attempts a quick return of the ball before the batter has taken his/her position or is off balance as a result of the previous pitch.
 - The runner is out for leaving the base too soon.
 - The pitcher pitches before the base runner has returned to his/her base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball is dead.
 - The ball slips from the pitcher's hand during his/her wind-up or during the back swing.
 - EFFECT -- (I 1-5) The ball is dead and all subsequent action on that pitch is canceled.

2. Batting

- A strike zone mat will be used behind home plate, if the pitch touches any portion of the mat with the proper speed and height, it will be called a strike.
- The batter should be declared out if he/she chops, bunts, or bunts downward at the ball.
- Infield Fly Rule: Batter should be called out immediately when he/she hits an infield fly (a ball which in the umpire's judgment, can be easily caught by a fielder on or near the infield area) with runners on first and second or first, second, and third with less than two outs.
- The batter will start with a count of 1 ball and 1 strike.
- After a batter has two strikes, he/she will receive one (1) free foul ball on the first foul ball. The second foul ball is strike three and the batter is out.
- Runners may tag-up and advance at own risk after the ball is caught on a fly-ball out; otherwise, the ball becomes dead and the runners may not advance.
- A batter may be called out immediately if he/she throws the bat. The batter may also be ejected.

3. Base Running

- STEALING: Under no circumstances is a runner permitted to steal a base.
- The base-runner may not leave the base that he/she is occupying until the ball has been hit legally by the batter, or the batter is awarded a base on balls.
- A runner may not run outside the three (3) foot line to avoid a tag or to run to interference with a fielder. EXCEPTION: A runner may run outside the three (3) foot line to avoid interfering with a fielder who is attempting to play the ball.
- A runner must avoid contact at any base. The runner may slide to avoid contact. The runner will be called out if he/she initiates contact in the judgment of the umpire. The runner may not attempt to knock the ball from a fielder to prevent being called out. Any runner who initiates the contact may be ejected without warning.
- No fielder may intentionally block a base to prevent the runner from reaching the base. The penalty is an automatic one additional base awarded to the runner.

4. Overthrows

- An overthrow into the gap along the sideline fences or an overthrow over the fence is considered out of play and the runner is awarded two bases from the time of the release.

5. Appeal Play

- Appeal plays will be dead ball situations.
- During an appeal, runners may not advance.
- Any infielder may make an appeal.
- The tag on the player or the base in question is not necessary to make an appeal, a request to the umpire to rule on the situation must be made.

6. Substitutions

- Re-entry Rule: A starting player may re-enter the game one time.
- The starting player may return to the line-up, but must take his/her original position in the batting order.
- If a non-starting player is substituted for a second time, he/she may not return to the game after the second substitution.

INJURIES

- There are no pinch runners unless a player is injured while running the bases and will be unable to finish the game. The pinch runner must be the person who made the last out. If it is the first inning, the pinch runner will be the person who made the last out or if there are no outs it will be the last person in the line up.
- If the injured player returns to the field or bats again, the player must also run and cannot use a pinch runner.
- If the injured player cannot return to the game to bat or field, a substitute must enter the game.

CO-REC RULES

- Teams can consist of the following combinations:
 1. 4 women and 4 men
 2. 4 women and 5 men
 3. 5 women and 4 men
 4. 5 women and 5 men
 5. 5 women and 6 men (The EH must be a male, must field 5 females)
 6. 6 women and 5 men (The EH may be either a male or female)
 7. 6 women and 6 men (There must be one male and one female EH)
- Batting orders must alternate men and women. In the case of combination #'s 2, 3, 5 or 6 an automatic out would have to be taken at the end of the batting order where members of the same sex would bat back to back.
- A maximum number of three males can play in the infield at the same time.
- Male outfielders may not enter the infield (where the dirt meets the grass) to make a play if the number of males would go over the 3 male limit in the infield.
- If a male batter receives a walk and a female batter is next to bat, the female has the option of taking first base with no liability to be put out or to become a batter.
- Unlimited substitution will be allowed. All players may re-enter a game more than once. A player entering a game must play a complete inning (one batting/fielding cycle) before leaving the game.
- All other rules apply.

MISCELLANEOUS RULES

- Teams at bat must remain in the dugout during their at-bat except for the batter, base-runners, first and third base coaches and the on-deck batter.
- Teams are responsible for retrieving all balls that are hit over the outfield fence.
- Alcohol & tobacco products are not permitted during Intramural events.
- The ALLERTON SPORTS COMPLEX is a "SMOKE-FREE" Facility, no smoking except in the parking lot.
- Base Coaches may not have fielder's gloves in the coaches box

EJECTION

- In the case of an ejection, the player not only must leave the premises but also needs to meet with the Coordinator or Assistant Director of Intramural Sports, before she/he may participate in the next activity.
- A player ejected from a game will not be allowed to return. A substitute will not be allowed to enter in that spot and an automatic out will be taken in that players spot in the batting order.

THE INTRAMURAL STAFF HAS THE RIGHT TO STOP A CONTEST IF THEY DEEM IT NECESSARY.