

Town of Onondaga Parks & Recreation

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2023 MEN'S SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES

The league or the Town of Onondaga or any other affiliates will not be responsible for injuries or property damage to all teams, players, coaches, and or other participants in the Town of Onondaga Recreation Leagues. There is no accident or injury insurance provided through the league. It is up to the team or individual participants to provide their own medical or property insurance.

The USSSA 2023 Softball Rulebook will apply in any situation not covered in these rules.

General Park Rules and Rainouts

- 1) Park rules are posted. Teams failing to follow these rules will receive a warning.
 - a. If a problem recurs, the team may be expelled without a refund.
- 2) Teams are responsible for the conduct of their players, children and their fans in the park.
 - a. There is to be no arguing with umpires rulings. All calls are final and players should be respectful of officials at all times.
- 3) Dogs are prohibited in all of our parks.
- 4) In case of severe rain or unplayable fields, wait until you hear from the League Coordinator, or someone from the Town of Onondaga Recreation Department, that your game has been rained-out.
 - a. Both teams must have the required number of players or risk a forfeit no matter how hard it's raining or how muddy the fields.
 - b. At the game site, the umpires will decide as to the fitness of the grounds. Once the game begins, it is the decision of the umpires.
 - c. Please remember that our unpredictable Central New York weather makes it difficult to please everyone in every situation.
- 5) Rained-out or rescheduled games will be made up by;
 - a. Arranging cancelled games using any open field times.
 - i. *This may cause previously scheduled games to move to fit scheduling.*
 - b. If needed, games will be made-up by extending the season.
 - i. *Season will be extended so that playoff will occur no later than the first week in September.*
 - c. Revisions to the schedule will be emailed to captains following cancellations.

Procedural Rules

- 6) Field Configuration is as follows: (*umpires will set up bases at the start of each game*)
 - a. Home plate to pitching "mound": Fifty (50) feet
 - b. Bases are placed sixty-five (65) feet apart
- 7) Home-runs:
 - a. Any fair, batted ball that lands in the wooded area, pavilion or play area surrounding the park beyond the field of play, **without first being touched by a**

player, striking a tree in foul/out of play territory, or striking the playing field in fair territory, will be deemed a homerun.

8) HOME RUN LIMIT RULE (2-up-rule)

- a. New as of 2022 season
- b. Applied **ONLY** at Howlett Hill Fields for Men's "A" League
- c. For this rule explicitly, "UP" or "DOWN" refers to up in total amount of home-runs hit, not runs or score.
- d. The "2-up-rule":
 - i. A team is able to have no more than two (2) "out-of-the-park" home runs more than their opposing team at any time.
 - ii. This rule does not apply to home-runs achieved through "all-you-can-get" home runs, as described in rule nine (9) below.
 - iii. Any time an "out-of-the-park" home run is hit, that exceeds the two (2) home run difference between the teams, the batter will be ruled OUT.
 - iv. If the home-run is in violation of the rule, but is NOT the third (3rd) out of the inning, base runners must return to their original base.
 - v. More home runs will be allowed for the "UP" team, if at any time the "DOWN" team
- e. -All Leagues have a Homerun Limit of 1 plus the "1-up Rule." This rule allows any team that has reached its homerun limit to hit another homerun as long as they are not more than one homerun ahead of the opposing team. For example, If team "A" has hit their 3 homeruns and team "B" has not hit their 3 homeruns, team "A" is not allowed to hit anymore homeruns; but if team "B" has hit their 3 homeruns, team "A" would be allowed to hit a 4th homerun (and if they do so, team "B" would be
- f. allowed to hit their 4th and 5th homerun- then "A" would be able to hit their 5th and 6th, etc...) NOTE: The home team in their
- g. last at-bat (5th or 6th inning to cause a "Run Rule" game, or the 7th inning, or any following extra inning) may go "1-up" in
- h. homeruns over the visiting team. This means that either team can "1-up" at any time, even to end the game. In all
- i. instances any additional home runs after reaching the maximum allowed at that time in the game, results in an "Out" for that
- j. batter.

9) All-you-can-get:

- a. Any fair, batted ball that lands in the wooded area, pavilion or play area surrounding the park beyond the field of play, **after being touched by a fielding player, whether it has touched the field of play or not, is considered "all you can get"**, and the play continues.
- b. Additional "all-you-can-get" scenarios applied to untouched batted balls:
 - i. Enters the woods **right** of the red flag on **field one (1)** at Howlett Hill.
 - ii. Enters the woods **left** of the red flag on **field two (2)** at Howlett Hill.
 - iii. Enters the pavilion behind left field at **field 1** at King Park.

10) Ground-rule double:

- a. A ground-rule double will be called when any untouched, fair, batted ball that lands in the wooded area, pavilion or play area surrounding the park beyond the field of play, after striking the ground in fair territory in the field of play;
 - i. **To the left** of the red flag marker on **field one (1)** at Howlett Hill.
 - ii. **To the right** of the red flag marker on **field two (2)** at Howlett Hill.
- 11) All games will be seven (7) innings.
 - a. In case of inclement weather, darkness or other unforeseen circumstances, four (4) innings will constitute a completed game (*3.5 innings if the home team is ahead*).
- 12) Any Official Game (*4 innings or 3 ½ if the home team is ahead*) that is called in the middle of an inning will have the final score as that of the last completed full inning. If it is a tie, it will stay a tie and be reflected as such in the standings, and the game will not be replayed.
 - a. Tie games will count as a half-a-win and half-a-loss for each team.
- 13) All playoff games must consist of seven (7) full innings unless the 12-run mercy rule is invoked in order for the game to be complete.
 - a. Any playoff game which is called because of darkness or other unforeseen circumstance before four (4) innings are completed will replay the game from the beginning. After four (4) completed innings, the game will be continued from the point that play was suspended.
- 14) Grace time (*to allow players to arrive*) is five (5) minutes for the first game only. There is no grace period for the second game.
- 15) There is a **one hour and ten-minute time limit for the first game** of the evening. The time begins at the scheduled game time, and includes the grace period.
 - a. There is no time limit for the second game of the evening.
- 16) Batting order (including last names and positions), game ball, and umpire's fees must be turned in to the umpires before the game starts.
- 17) Both teams must keep their own score and the home team's book is the official score book.
 - a. *Visitors should check scores between innings.*
- 18) At the end of each game you win, your book must be signed by one umpire.
- 19) Winning team must call or email the score in by 9:00 AM on the Thursday directly following the game.
 - a. Failure to call in your score could result in a loss even though you may have won the game on the field. Please make sure you phone in the accurate score.
- 20) The four teams with the best season records make the playoffs.
 - a. Ties in the standings at the end of the regular season will be broken by the following procedure;
 - i. leader in head-to-head results of the teams in question, then,
 - ii. by total number of runs scored by the teams in question then,
 - iii. by a simple coin toss, conducted by the League Director, with one witness from each team present.
 - 1. *The decision of the League Director will be final.*
- 21) Determining league placement:

- a. The most losing team (most overall losses in regular season) in “A” league will be moved to the “B” league the following year.
 - b. The most winning team (most overall wins in regular season) in “B” league will to “A” league the following year.
 - c. All new teams will be placed in “B” league unless a new team elects to enter “A” league of their own choice.
 - d. *The decision of the League Director will be final.*
- 22) The twelve (12) run “mercy” rule is in effect for all games (including playoffs).
- a. If a team is ahead by twelve (12) or more runs from the fifth inning on, or four-and-a-half if the home team is ahead, the game is over.
- 23) If a protest arises during the game, the captain or manager of the protesting team should immediately notify the umpire and their opponents that the game is under protest, and a note made at that point in the official score book signed by the umpire. Protests may be made on matters involving interpretation of the playing rules or on eligibility of players - never on judgment calls.
- a. All protests must be in the recreation office in writing by noon on the Friday immediately following the protested game, with a \$25.00 protest fee. If the protest is lost the money is not returned, if the protest is valid the fee is returned.
 - b. A formal protest should contain the following information:
 - i. The date, time, and place of the game.
 - ii. The names of the umpires and score keepers.
 - iii. The score books.
 - iv. The rule under which the protest is being filed.
 - v. The decision and/or conditions surrounding the cause of protest.
 - vi. All necessary facts involved in the matter of the protest.
- 24) Any unsportsmanlike actions or conduct by a team or its members may result in ejection from the game at the discretion of the umpire(s) or even suspension or removal from the league pending investigation by the League Director. Such behavior could include, but not be limited to: foul language, incessant arguing, verbal or physical abuse directed at another player, fan, and/or official, and fighting. An ejected player will be suspended from the next scheduled game. A second ejection will result in permanent suspension.

Roster & Player Rules

- 25) Maximum number of players on the roster is twenty (20).
- a. Players must be at least 18 years of age, and should be prepared to provide proof of identity (e.g., driver’s license) if necessary.
 - b. Any individual may only be on one roster at any given time.
 - i. An individual may choose to be removed from one team and play for another before the final roster deadline, but may only do this once.
 - ii. To qualify as a player eligible for playoffs, they must play at least four (4) full games with the new team.
- 26) Additions to the roster must be submitted to the Recreation Department Office at the above address by the Monday before the scheduled game.
- a. No roster changes may be made after the first Friday in July.
 - b. Only players on the final roster who have played in at least four (4) regular season games are eligible for playoffs.

- 27) Teams must have at least nine (9) players at game time.
 - a. A tenth player may enter the game at any time, but must bat tenth (10) in the lineup
- 28) You must finish the game with the same number of batters in your lineup as you began with. If a team loses a player due to any reason other than injury, and cannot replace him/her, that batter's spot in the line-up becomes an automatic out and remains so for the remainder of the game*, or until a substitute is inserted.
 - a. *If a player is injured during a game, the injured players place in the order will be "skipped", not an out.
 - b. If a team is unable to field at least 9 players after a game has begun, the game will be forfeited by the team unable to produce enough players.

Batting

- 29) When teams use the Additional Hitters (AH), any ten (10) may come out on defense during any inning.
- 30) The "3-2" count: each batter starts with no balls and no strikes. Three (3) balls sanction a walk, and two (2) strikes incurs a strike-out.
 - a. A batter is out if they hit two foul balls AFTER the first strike. The umpire will usually remind a batter when the next hit must be fair.
- 31) The plate is "alive" - a pitched ball that hits home plate may be called a strike, but it is not automatic.
- 32) The batter is out for stepping on or across home plate while hitting a fair or foul ball. If this occurs, the ball is dead.
 - a. Any base runners would remain where they were at the time of the pitch.


Pitching

- 33) The pitching distance is fifty (50) feet. A Pitcher may elect to go back up to six (6) feet from the "mound", to get a walking start.
- 34) The pitching arc is "3' to 10'" - three feet higher than the pitcher's hand at release point and not higher than 10 feet from ground. This is completely within the umpire's jurisdiction. As the rulebook states, there is to be no arguing of balls and strikes.

Baserunning

- 35) Courtesy runners are allowed.
 - a. Courtesy runners must be the last person out of the same gender.
 - b. *This rule is a sportsmanlike tool to avoid causing or aggravating an injury.*
- 36) There is a "courtesy step". Base runners may come off their bag when the pitch reaches the plate or hits the ground. (*It can be more than one step*).
- 37) All runners must either slide into second base when there is a play at the bag, or run out of the way of the defense when the play at second is complete and a throw to first is attempted (*double play*).
 - a. If a player runs into a defensive player who is standing up with the ball, it will be called interference and an automatic double play, with interfering player and the runner closest to home both called out.

Equipment

- 38) Usable bats will be listed as “Licensed Bats” by the U.S.S.S.A. web site (www.ussa.com).
- a. All bats must be USSSA must have this logo: 
 - b. *Changes on this list may occur during the season.*
- 39) Whichever team is “home” must provide bases. The safety bag at 1st is mandatory.
- 40) The Home team must supply a new ball for each game.
- a. Visitors should supply a back-up ball that is acceptable to the umpires.
- 41) There is no uniform rule, but all players must have same color shirt. Shirts are to be worn at all times.
- 42) Any cleats that are used must be plastic. No metal cleats are allowed

Umpire fees and Forfeits

- 43) An umpire is to receive \$30.00/game for a regulation game of at least 4 innings or 3-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead.
- 44) If a game is started, but does not reach the point of being an official game, umpires receive half fee (\$15.00 per game). If and when the game is rescheduled, the full fee must be paid by the teams.
- 45) If only one umpire reports to the game each team pays that umpire \$20.00 per game.
- a. *Please notify the League Director later on if this ever happens.*
- 46) If both teams and umpires are present and the game is not started, each team pays the umpires a \$5.00 show-up fee.
- 47) In the event a team forfeits a game, the forfeiting team will be responsible for the \$60.00 forfeit fee.
- a. In case of a forfeit, do NOT pay the umpires at the field. The fee is paid by the Recreation Department through the forfeit fund.
 - b. If a team forfeits, it must replenish the fee after the forfeit to remain in the league. This replenishment is due to the recreation department before the following weeks games begin.
 - c. Any moneys designated as “forfeit fees” will be returned to the team captains after the conclusion of the season.
 - d. **This forfeit fee can be easily avoided by notifying the recreation supervisor before Noon on gameday or sooner.**

Any additions or rule changes will be forwarded in writing to the listed Team Captain/Manager.