Softball Rules

All participants must show a valid KENT STATE UNIVERSITY ID or Government Issued ID no less than 5 minutes 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.

**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.

**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 man, must field 5 women)
  6. 6 women and 5 men * (The EH may be either a man or women)
  7. 6 women and 6 men (There must be one man and one women EH)
- All infielders and outfielders must remain in their respective areas until the batter has made contact with the ball.
- All other rules apply.

**EQUIPMENT**
- Each team manager or captain must check out equipment for their 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, metal tipped cleats, or screw in type cleats are NOT PERMITTED to be worn at any time. If cleats are worn, they must be one-piece 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 Competitive Sports Coordinator or Competitive Sports GA(s).
  - A Banned Bat List will be available for viewing on IMLeagues & at Allerton
  - Bats on this list will not be permitted for Intramural Use
- 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 Sports Supervisor.
- All bats suspected of being altered or non-approved by the Umpire or Intramural Sports 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 Intramural Sports 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 & LINEUPS
- Players who arrive late to the game must check-in with the Umpire at the next available opportunity. They will not be permitted to play until after checking-in.
- The team manager will be responsible for making sure that all of their players check-in with a valid KSU Flash Card or valid Government Issued ID, with an Intramural Sports Staff Member.
- 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 each inning.
- 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.

GRACE PERIOD
- Teams will be allowed a maximum five (5) minute grace period for the first game of a double header.
- 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 doubleheader. There will be no grace period for the 2nd game.
- Forfeited games will be scored 10-0

THE GAME
- A regulation game is five (5) innings. There will be no time limitations.
- Four full innings need to be completed for a game to be called final. Only the top of the 4th inning needs to be 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 an hour before the scheduled start of play. Once play begins for the day, the Competitive Sports Coordinator, Competitive Sports GA(s) or Intramural Sports Supervisor 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 postseason 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 five innings, will remain a tie during the regular season.
- In the Playoffs, teams will continue to play extra innings until there is a winner.
- 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.
- Teams will be keeping their own score (most importantly outs and runs scored). At the end of each half inning, each team will meet with the umpire to review the score. Score discrepancies must be brought up immediately or during the end of the half inning. Discrepancies in lineups must be brought up when the batter is at bat. Teams are encouraged to keep lineups for the opposing teams.
- Bases will be at 70 feet in-length

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.
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- Any infraction outside of the guidelines listed above is an illegal pitch. The Umpire shall call a ball on the pitch 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 pitch before the batter has taken their 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 their base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball is dead
  - The ball slips from the pitcher's hand during their wind-up or during the back swing

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 shall be declared out if they chops, bunts, or bunts downward at the ball.
   - Infield Fly Rule: The batter shall be called out immediately when they hit an infield fly (a ball which in the umpire's judgment, can be routinely caught by a fielder on or near the infield area) with runners on first and second or bases loaded, with less than two outs. Runners may advance at their own risk. The play will remain live.
   - The batter will start with a count of 1 ball and 1 strike.
   - After a batter has two strikes, they will receive one (1) courtesy foul, on their first foul ball. The second foul ball is strike three and the batter will be out.
   - Runners may tag-up and advance at their 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 they throw the bat. The batter may also be ejected.

3. Base Running
   - No Stealing!
   - A runner may not leave the base that they are 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 interfere with a fielder.
   - EXCEPTION: A runner may run outside the three (3) foot line to avoid interfering with a fielder who is attempting to make a play on the ball.
   - A runner must avoid contact at any base. The runner may slide or give themselves up, to avoid contact. The runner will be called out if they initiate any contact, in the judgment of the Umpire. The runner may not attempt to knock the ball from a fielder’s possession, to prevent being out. Any runner who initiates contact may be ejected without warning.
   - No fielder may intentionally block a base to prevent the runner from reaching the base. If it occurs, the runner will be awarded the base they were attempting to reach, plus an additional base.

4. Overthrows
   - An overthrow into the gap along the sideline fences, an overthrow over the fence or in the dugout is considered out-of-play:
     - First Play on the Infield: Runners will be awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.
     - Second Plays on the Infield or Plays from the Outfield: Runners will be awarded two bases from the time of the release of the throw

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

- 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.

MERCY RULE

- The game will be called under the mercy rule if one team is up by 20 runs at the end of the 3rd inning or 10 runs at the end of the 4th inning.

MISCELLANEOUS RULES

- Team’s 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 Home Runs hit.
- Alcohol & tobacco products are PROHIBITED during Intramural Sports activities.
- The ALLERTON SPORTS COMPLEX is a “SMOKE-FREE” Facility

INJURIES

- There are no pinch runners unless a player is injured while running the bases. The injured player will not be permitted to return to 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 lineup. If an Umpire determines that a player must leave the game due to an injury such as visible blood, a pinch runner may be used and the injured player may be allowed to return to the game at the discretion of the umpire.
- If the injured player returns to the field or bats again, the player must also run and cannot use a pinch runner.

BLOOD RULE

- If and when an official observes a player is bleeding, or has an open wound, or has an excessive amount of blood on their uniform (clothing), that player must leave the game.
- In an instance when a substitute is not available, the official may allow time for the player to receive medical attention, but the time may not be excessive in the judgment of the official.
- If a substitute is available, the player must leave and may not re-enter until after the clock has run and a substitution opportunity occurs.

EJECTION

- In the case of an ejection, the player not only must leave the premises but also needs to meet with the Competitive Sports Coordinator or Competitive Sports GA(s), before they may participate in the next activity.
- A player ejected from a game will not be allowed to return. If a team is using an Extra Hitter, that player may play in the field. If a team is not using the Extra Hitter and has a substitute available, they may substitute that person into the Extra Hitter position and have them play in the field.

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