
IRB Senior Softball League - Official Rules

Version 04.24.26

1. Governance

1.1 General Authority

1.1.1 NOTE: IF A SITUATION ARISES THAT IS NOT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING RULES, THE UMPIRE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING THE FAIREST RESOLUTION. Anything not specifically mentioned will be governed by the ISSA International Senior Softball Association rulebook.

1.2 Important Rules

1.2.1 No rule may be altered by any one person.

1.2.2 Any rule that becomes controversial during the course of a season will be reviewed and considered for amendment and voted on by the Board of Directors (BOD).

1.3 Definitions

1.3.1 Super Senior (SS): Any person 70 years of age or older. The Super Senior rules will also apply to Women League members.

1.3.2 Waiting List Player (WLP)/Substitutes: Any player who registers and enters the league after the player draft has been completed

2. Game Structure

2.1 Team Composition

2.1.1 A "Fielded Team" will consist of 10 Players: 4 Outfielders, 4 Infielders, a Pitcher, and a Catcher.

2.2 Game Length

2.2.1 All games are 9 innings.

2.2.2 If a game is tied after nine innings, one extra inning will be played.

2.2.3 If the game ends in a tie after one extra inning, the game ends in a tie.
2.2.4 Games shortened by rain before completing 5 innings will resume at the point of the delay.

2.3 Scoring

2.3.1 A Team can only score a maximum of 5 runs per inning unless a team is trailing by six runs or more, then that team can score as many runs as possible in any given inning until they tie the score (Catch Up Rule).

2.3.2 The inning will end once the team ties the score.

2.3.3 Teams can score as many runs as possible in the ninth or subsequent innings.

3. Pitching

3.1 Screen Placement

3.1.1 The screen must not exceed 4 feet from the pitching rubber.

3.1.2 The edge of the screen shall always be within the dirt of the mound.

3.2 Pitcher Positioning

3.2.1 The pitcher should always attempt to be behind the screen after each pitch.

3.3 Ball Contact

3.3.1 A thrown ball that contacts the screen is a “dead ball”. Base runners will be allowed to advance one base, that being the base the runner was heading to.

3.3.2 If a batted ball contacts a defensive player and strikes the screen, the runner will be called safe and awarded first base. All other runners will advance one base, and the ball is dead.

3.3.3 A batted ball that hits the pitcher’s screen is a strike. Any third strike that hits the safety screen is an out.

4. Batting

4.1 Strike Zone & Plate

4.1.1 An expanded Home Plate will be used for strikes only. Home plate measures 21" x 40".

4.2 Illegal Pitches

4.2.1 Pitches higher than 12ft and under 6ft will not be considered a strike, will be verbally identified by the umpire as "ILLEGAL" before reaching the batter. However, the batter can still swing at the pitch.

4.3 Foul Tips

4.3.1 A foul tip caught by the catcher must exceed the height of the batter to be considered an out.

4.4 Count Rules

4.4.1 Each batter will start with a count of 1 ball and 1 strike. A foul ball on the 3rd strike is an out.

4.4.2 **SUMMER ONLY:** Each batter will start with a count of 2 balls and 2 strikes. A foul ball on the 3rd strike is NOT an out; on any subsequent fouls the batter is out.

4.5 Home Runs

4.5.1 Home Runs are not permitted. If any batter hits a fair ball over the fence, they will be called out.

4.6 Ground Rule Doubles

4.6.1 A ball touched by a player or one that hits the ground before it goes over the fence is a **Ground Rule Double** for all players.

4.6.2 A batted ball that hits the yellow fence cap and goes over the fence is an **out** for all players.

4.6.3 A batted ball that goes under the fence or is lodged in the fence is also a **ground rule double**.

4.7 Warning Track Rule (Super Seniors & Women)

4.7.1 All outfielders, including rovers, will start on the warning track area of the outfield and can run in only after the **BALL IS HIT**. If any fielder is observed moving into the outfield grass before the ball is hit, the batter receives a base on balls.

4.7.2 Infielders will start on the infield dirt.

4.7.3 ONCE THE BATTER HITS THE BALL, Outfielders and Infielders may move in any direction to field the ball.

4.7.4 If a batted ball by a Super Senior reaches the outfield grass, the batter is automatically called Safe.

4.7.5 Any fielder can field a ball as they move into the outfield grass to make a play, but if the ball contacts the outfield grass when they field a ground ball, the SS or Female batter cannot be thrown out at first base.

4.7.6 A force out at any other base is legal.

5. Base Running

5.1 Home Plate

5.1.1 There will be two “Home Plates” for safety purposes, and all plays at the plate will be a force out; no tags are allowed.

5.1.2 The catcher (or any other player) only needs to catch the ball and step on the expanded Home Plate to determine if a runner is Safe or Out.

5.1.3 If a runner does not use the Alternate “Home Plate” in an attempt to score, the runner will be ruled out.

5.2 Commitment Line

5.2.1 The 20-foot commitment line from home plate is the 3rd base running rule. If a runner touches the line and attempts to return to 3rd base, the runner is automatically out.

5.3 Double First Base

5.3.1 For safety purposes, there will be two first bases.

5.3.2 Runners will use the “alternate” first base on balls hit in the infield when a play at first base is likely. Failure to do so will result in the runner being called out.

5.3.3 This will also include an overthrow by the infielders unless the umpire deems it a safety issue.

5.3.4 The “alternate” first base is not required to be used on outfield hits when a play at first base is unlikely.

5.4 Leading Off / Stealing

5.4.1 Super Senior or female runners can lead off a base when the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand; any violation will result in the runner being called out. However, any runner can be picked off.

5.4.2 There is no stealing.

5.4.3 If there is an attempt to pick off the runner, the runner can proceed to the next base at their own risk after returning to the previous base.

5.5 Pinch Runners

5.5.1 All batters are required to run to First Base. A batter is not permitted a Pinch Runner until the batter reaches First Base.

5.5.2 The Pinch Runner option is intended to address safety or medical issues. It is not intended to allow players or managers to improve their team’s scoring potential by substituting a faster runner.

5.5.4 The only person who can call for a pinch runner is THE RUNNER.

5.5.5 Pinch Runners can be any player age 65 or older or any female player. They can Pinch Run for any batter, including batters under age 65.

5.5.6 A Pinch Runner can only be a Pinch Runner once per inning.

5.5.7 When a pinch runner is on base, and it is his/her turn to bat, an automatic out is called, forfeiting his/her at bat, and the runner remains on base.

5.5.9 Rule #5.4.1 is in effect when the pinch runner is a Super Senior.

5.5.10 Any player can exempt themselves from being a Pinch Runner.

5.5.11 If no one over 65 is available, the batter who made the last out should be used to pinch run.

5.6 Sliding

5.6.1 Sliding into 2nd or 3rd base will be allowed. This includes sliding or diving back to a base that was already touched.

5.6.3 Sliding will be discontinued when the first player is carted off the field!!

5.7 Collisions

5.7.1 A runner must make every effort to avoid colliding with opposing players while running the bases.

5.7.2 If, in the umpire’s judgement, a runner misses a base to avoid a collision with a defensive player, the runner will be declared safe.

5.7.3 If a runner intentionally collides with a defensive player, the runner will

be called out.

5.7.4 The batter may also be called out if, in the judgment of the umpire, the collision prevented a double play.

5.8 Walks

5.8.1 On any walks, the batter can remain at bat, and a substitute runner will be awarded first base. (All substitute runner rules apply)

6. Team Composition

6.1 Minimum Players

6.1.1 If any team does not have at least 7 roster players, the game is a forfeit, and a loss is recorded for the team unable to field at least 7 roster players after a 15-minute grace period.

6.1.2 If neither team has at least 7 roster players, the game is a loss for both teams.

6.2 Roster Size

6.2.1 A team with an original roster of 10 or more players does not need to reduce its roster to equal its opponent's roster.

6.3 Playing Time

6.3.1 In the spirit of IRBSSL, managers must play all available players equally on a rotational basis. The exception to this rule is the pitcher.

6.3.3 With 11 players, 9 players must sit at least one inning on defense.

6.3.4 With 12 or more players, no player should sit more than 2 innings on defense unless they request to do so.

6.4 Batting Order

6.4.1 All players must bat when it is their turn in the lineup unless a player has opted to remove themselves from the game for a medical or safety issue.

6.4.2 If it is observed by players of either team that this rule is not being followed, the umpire can be requested to issue a warning to the offending team manager.

6.4.3 A continued violation in the game will result in a penalty of forfeit.

6.5 Waiting List Players

6.5.1 If a team requires one or more waiting list players, that team may petition the Board for players.

6.5.2 No "Waiting List Players" will be allowed to play unless an active player is injured or has medical issues that cause him or her to miss 3 or more consecutive games, and the active roster drops below 12 Players.

6.5.3 WLP will be assigned by the Board at random and will remain with the team for the remainder of the season.

6.5.4 When healed, the previously injured or medically inactive player will return to their original team.

7. Substitutes

7.1 Substitute Limits

7.1.1 A team can only have a maximum of 3 substitutes for a total of 11 players if they use substitutes.

7.2 Substitute Pool

7.2.1 If they use substitutes, they must come from the substitute pool as managed by the SUB MASTER.

7.3 Eligibility

7.3.1 Substitutes can be any player category.

7.3.2 All substitutes must bat at the bottom of the order.

7.3.3 Under 70 are limited to 1st base, right field, or catcher.

7.3.3 Super seniors are treated as regular players and can play anywhere.

8. Administrative Rules

8.1 Game Times

8.1.1 The start and end times of all games will be determined by the Board of Directors for each season.

8.1.2 Game times will be based on the availability of the field per the City of Indian Rocks Beach and the Indian Rocks Beach Little League (IRBLL).

8.2 Rainouts

8.2.1 Games shortened by rain prior to completing 5 innings will resume at the point of the delay.

8.3 Appeals

8.3.1 Managers (and ONLY managers) will be allowed 2 appeals per game, regardless of the outcome.

8.3.2 Umpires are encouraged to ask for help if they are unsure of a call.

8.3.3 If they see a call that is wrong or questionable, they should meet and discuss so as to come to an agreement.

8.4 Nonplaying Managers

8.4.1 Nonplaying managers who are awarded an extra draft pick are not permitted to play during the season.

8.5 Infield Fly Rule

8.5.1 There is no infield fly rule in IRBSL.

9. League Operations

9.1 Seasons

9.1.1 Winter Jan. 1st to Apr. 30th

9.1.2 Summer May 1st to Aug. 31st

9.1.3 Fall Sept. 1st to Dec. 31st

9.2 Registration

9.2.1 We will allow 2 to 3 weeks for registration.

9.2.2 All applicants who are only available for 1-4 games during the season will be put on the sub list.

9.2.3 Non-IRB Residents will be put on the sub list and the waiting list.

9.2.4 Once the number of IRB residents reaches 51%, non-IRB residents will be able to register.

9.2.5 The Board of Directors can waive this residency requirement.

9.3 Draft

9.3.1 The draft will be held on the first Monday after the close of registration occurs, and the review of the player pool is complete, along with the current season structure regarding the number of teams and identifying managers.

9.3.2 If there is an odd number of players for the draft that will cause one or more teams to have more players than other teams, the selection of the remaining players will be determined by a blind draw among all the managers.

9.3.3 The maximum number of players on a team should be capped at 13.

9.3.4 For a 4 TEAM SEASON Draft Maximum = 52 Players

9.3.5 For a 5 TEAM SEASON Draft Maximum = 65 Players

9.3.6 For a 6 TEAM SEASON Draft maximum = 78 Players

9.3.7 For a 7 TEAM SEASON Draft maximum = 91 Players

9.3.8 Any additional players should be put on a waiting list, but allowed to sub for a maximum of 4 games.

9.4 Team Manager Selection

9.4.1 The criteria for selecting team managers will be based on the following: Knowledge of the players, Temperament, Knowledge of the league principles and rules

9.4.2 The manager's term is 1 year. Selections are made as soon as possible after registration is closed.

9.4.3 Managers are not required to play.

9.4.4 Potential Managers are at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

10. Playoffs

10.1 Four-Team Season

GAME 1: 1-seed plays 4-seed

GAME 2: 2-seed plays 3-seed

GAME 3: Winners of each game play for the championship.

10.2 Five-Team Season

GAME 1: 5-seed and 4-seed compete in a 'play-in' game

GAME 2: 1-seed plays the winner of the play-in game

GAME 3: 2-seed plays 3-seed

GAME 4: Winners of game 2 and game 3 play for the championship.

10.3 Six-Team Season

GAME 1: 6-seed plays 3-seed

GAME 2: 5-seed plays 4-seed

GAME 3: 1-seed plays the lowest remaining seed

GAME 4: 2-seed plays the highest remaining seed

GAME 5: Winners of games 3 and 4 play for the championship.

10.4 Seven-Team Season

1-seed gets a bye

GAME 1: 2-seed plays 7-seed

GAME 2: 3-seed plays 6-seed

GAME 3: 4-seed plays 5-seed

At this point, there are 4 teams left

GAME 4: Highest remaining seed plays lowest remaining seed

GAME 5: Middle two remaining seeds play

GAME 6: Winners of GAMES 4 and 5 play for championship