

# HCBA SOFTBALL LEAGUE

## OFFICIAL CO-ED RULES

1. The standard softball rules of Minneapolis USA Softball apply except as modified below.
2. Rain games will be called ONLY if the Minneapolis Park Board has called off its games for that evening.

Captains should check the Minneapolis Parks website to determine if games will be played. The website address is:

[www.minneapolisparcs.org](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org)

-On the left hand column click Activities & Programs

-Then click Adult Sports on the left hand column

-Then see Weather Cancelations on the right hand column

If the Park Board does not call games, games will be played as scheduled.

Games may be called on the field at the discretion of the umpire; *however*, in cases of rain or threatening weather where no umpire is present, a rain out is declared at 10 minutes past the scheduled starting time unless team captains are present and agree otherwise.

If your team needs to forfeit, notify the other team's captain, Scott Gagnon at the Park Board ([SGagnon@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:SGagnon@minneapolisparcs.org)) and HCBA Commissioner Peter Selness. Forfeits must be called no later than 3:30pm.

3. A team may start and finish a game with only 9 players.

These 9 players MUST be in a **5:4** gender ratio. If a team can not do this, they must forfeit the game. There will be a maximum of ten (10) minutes allowed before the start of games to get at least nine (9) players on the field.

If a forfeit is called, the teams **MAY** play a practice game, using the umpire, by loaning a player or players to the team short of players.

The gender ratio while playing in the field must ALWAYS be **5:4** or **5:5**, no exceptions. For example, a team playing with 6 female players and 4 male players would have to play with 5 females and 4 males in the field with the 6<sup>th</sup> female staying on the bench.

The batting order MUST alternate by male/female.

In the event that a team has only 4 players of one gender, there will **NOT** be an automatic out charged where the fifth player should bat. Instead, the first person to hit will be up again. For example, the batting order for a team with only 4 female players would be as follows.

Female #1

Male #1

Female #2

Male #2

Female #3

Male #3

Female #4  
Male #4  
Female #1  
Male #5  
Female #2  
Male #6...and so on.

4. A team may bat an unlimited number of players regardless of whether they are playing in the field. Players batting who are not playing in the field must alternate between men and woman.
5. All team members must be at least age 18 at the start of the season.
6. The pitcher will pitch from a distance of 50' from home plate.
7. The team in the field may play its players at any position. There is **NO** requirement to alternate men and women between pitcher and catcher or the infield positions and outfield positions (*e.g., a team may have men play both pitcher and catcher; a team may have women play 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, and shortstop*). Additionally, unlimited substitutions in the field are permitted so long as the 5:4 or 5:5 ratio is maintained.
8. Ten (10) runs is the maximum amount of runs that can be scored by one team in an inning. After the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) run is scored, the batting teams' half inning ends immediately and the opposing team comes to bat. This rule is waived during the final inning of a game.
9. Games will be seven (7) innings or 55 minutes - whichever comes first - **EXCEPT** when a team is winning by ten (10) or more runs at the end of the fifth inning; then, the game is over. No new innings will start 55 minutes after the start of the game.
10. A pinch runner is allowed for an injured player who is batting once the batter reaches first base. The pinch runner shall be the player of the same sex as the injured player who most recently made an out.
11. The arc requirement for all pitches shall be 6' to 10' from the ground.
12. The pitch count will be 3 balls and 2 strikes, with one (1) courtesy strike on any second-strike foul ball. No lead offs on the bases.
13. If a batter's first swing results in a caught foul tip, the batter will be out only if before being caught the ball rises above the batter's head. Otherwise, a caught foul tip will be a strike.
14. We will **NOT** follow the ASA rule regarding walks. All genders take one (1) base on a walk.
15. A 12-inch ASA slow pitch ball will be used to pitch. These balls are optic yellow with red stitching with a .52 core, 300 lb. compression. Look for the ASA certified "diamond" logo on the ball for best results.  
  
At the start of each game, the home team will supply a new "game" ball and the visiting team will supply a "back-up" ball.
16. Only ASA-approved bats may be used.

Please see [http://www.asasoftball.com/about/certified\\_equipment.asp](http://www.asasoftball.com/about/certified_equipment.asp) for the ASA non-approved bat list.

17. The Minneapolis ASA infield fly rule will be in effect. The infield fly rule applies when there are runners at 1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd, and 3<sup>rd</sup>; LESS than two (2) outs; and the batter hits a routine pop fly in the infield. When invoking the infield fly rule, the umpire must make a judgment as to whether the pop fly is routine.
18. On NE #6 and #7, any ball hit into the trees will be automatically ruled a ground double. On NE #5, however, the ball will be played "as is"; there will be no automatic home run or ground double calls.
19. Playoffs will be scheduled following the regular season. If teams are tied, standings to determine playoff positions shall be determined by: (1) head to head results between the tied teams; then (2) regular season run differential; (3) number of games the team has forfeited; and finally (4) if the teams are still tied, the standings will be determined by coin-flip.

***NOTE: These rules are intended to provide uniformity and avoid confusion among the teams regarding the league requirements.***

***Captains: Please make sure your players are acquainted with these rules. It is also a good idea to bring a copy to the fields to show to any umpires unfamiliar with them. Key differences between the HCBA league and other MPRB softball leagues are below:***

***FOUL:*** One (1) courtesy strike on any second- strike foul ball is allowed. (See Rule #12).

***WALK RULE:*** All genders take one (1) base on a walk (See Rule #10).

***GENDER BALANCE:*** The team in the field may play its players at any position (See Rule #7) as long as the gender ratio while playing in the field is 5:4 or 5:5 (See Rule #3).

***Please remind your umpires of these key differences at the beginning of each game to ensure the HCBA league rules are applied consistently in all games.***