

PROSPECT PARK WOMEN'S SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES



2021 Edition

Celebrating Women's Softball in Prospect Park since 1981
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Note: Prospect Park Women's Softball League (PPWSL) plays by USA (Amateur Softball Association) Rules for Modified Fast Pitch except as amended by these League Rules.

I: GAME RULES

1. *Pre-Game Exchange:*

Teams must exchange ***batting lineups, positions, and uniform numbers*** prior to the start of the game as stipulated in USA Rule 4, Section 1.A.1. & 2., except that the last sentence of Section 1. A.1. is deleted and the following will apply: "All available substitutes must be listed on the pre-game lineup but their position in the lineup and defensive position may be announced when they are substituted into the game.

- a. The following is added to USA Rule 4, Section 1.A.2.: "Teams must announce players who arrive late to the field (i.e. after the lineups are submitted) and whether or not they will be substituted into the game when they arrive.
- b. Substitutions must be reported to the opposing team and umpire(s). These lineup and substitution rules must conform to our League Playing Rules, Section II. 2 & 3.

2. *Minimum lineup requirement:*

The game must begin with at least nine (9) players on each team. If one player should not be able to finish the game and there are no backup players, the game may be played with eight (8) players but never less than eight (8). If the 10th player arrives, they may be entered immediately. They must be entered into the 10th batting position. When a game is started with ten (10) players and ends with nine (9), there shall not be an automatic out when the 10th batting slot comes up. The same shall be true when starting with nine (9) players and ending with eight (8). If a game starts with nine (9) players, there shall not be an automatic out when the 10th batting slot comes up. If a team does not have nine (9) players, the opposing team must bring this to the umpire's attention before the start of the game.

3. *Emergency substitution rule:*

In the case of an injury to a player during the course of a game, a player on the bench may substitute for the injured player even if that player has already been in the game and since removed. This should only be done if all players on the bench have already played. If an eligible player on the bench has not yet played, that player *must* be the substitute for the injured player.

4. *A Courtesy Runner:*

A Courtesy Runner may be declared at the plate conference at the start of the game for any player who is injured or who has a physical handicap, provided both coaches agree prior to the start of the game. Each player requiring a courtesy runner must be announced at the plate conference and starred on the lineup card, unless an injury occurs during the game. Additional courtesy runners can be added in the event of injury during the game. If a player requests a courtesy runner they must use one at every at bat. The courtesy runner must always be the player who made the last recorded out -- i.e.: the courtesy runner might not always be the same player. Violation of the courtesy runner rule results in the runner being declared out.

5. *Game balls:*

Each team must present one new ball at the beginning of each game. The balls are to be used

at the top of the first and bottom of the fourth innings.

6. **Umpires and Scorekeeping:**

- a. Only the team representative designated at the **plate conference** at the start of the game may discuss a play with an umpire.
- b. The two teams' **scorekeepers** should consult with each other at the end of every half-inning in order to ensure their records agree and confirm the score to the umpire.
- c. **Report final score:** The home team must report the final score to the umpire at the end of the game and to League scorekeeper via email to **scores@ppwsl.org** and CC the away team, **within 24 hours after the game.**

7. **Batting Rules:**

- a. No bunting **or** stealing.
- b. A **hit batter** is not awarded first base.
- c. The batter may not become a runner on a **dropped third strike.**
- d. **The on-deck batter** must be in the designated on-deck area. Immediately on a hit by the preceding batter, the on-deck batter must remove the bat from the play area, provided they do not interfere with the play.

8. **Base Running Rules:**

- a. **Taking a lead:** A player may not leave the base before the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- b. On an attempted pick-off play the ball is in play. The base runner or runners must re-tag the last held base before attempting to advance. A pick-off is a force play, not a tag play.
- c. On a play at a base, a player must slide or give themselves up. The umpire has the option to eject the runner from the game if they interfere with the defensive position player.

9. **Pitching Rules**

PPWSL will follow the USA pitching rules for modified fast pitch with a 10-person field as per USA Pitching Rule 6 Sections 1-3 and 8 as modified below:

- a. Players with Advanced pitching ratings will be limited to up to four (4) innings pitched in any game, regardless of the inning they were inserted and the game duration, including any extra innings played beyond seven (7) innings. This applies to pitching only and does not otherwise limit the playing time of a player with an Advanced pitching rating. All other League other rules, including but not limited to "lineup," "all players must play," "two-inning rules," and "substitution" rules otherwise remain in effect with the understanding that a player with an Advanced pitching rating cannot be reinserted to pitch in any circumstance after pitching a maximum of four innings.

II: LEAGUE PLAYING RULES

1. Each team must have a copy of the latest **USA Official Softball Rules** and a copy of the **PPWSL Rules and Regulations at every game**. Each team rep. is responsible for ensuring that each player has received a copy of the league rules.
2. **All players must play:** Teams must inform each other, at the pre-game meeting, as to which present players will not play, except in case of injury during the game. Teams must specify if said players are not playing due to injury, sickness, advanced pregnancy, non-compliance with practice rules, coaching or personal choice of the player. Players who are not playing must be informed by their team coach or manager prior to the game that they are not going to play and why. If this action is not the choice of the players and is done without their consent, they must immediately inform the opposing team coach and the umpire. The game may be played under protest if the player is benched without their consent, or if a player has not played and had not been identified at the plate conference. If the protest is upheld, the offending team will incur a penalty as follows: if the offending team won the game, the penalty is forfeiture of the game. If the offending team lost the game, the penalty is that the offending team begins the next played game with a three (3) run deficit.
3. **Each player is to play at least two defensive innings and at least one at bat** (provided they have complied with their team's practice requirements). If a game lasts 5 innings or more, each player must play at least two (2) defensive innings and must have at least one (1) at bat. The game may be protested if this rule is not complied with. If the protest is upheld, the offending team will incur a penalty as follows: if the offending team won the game, the penalty is forfeiture. If the offending team lost the game, the penalty is that the offending team begins the next played game with a three (3) run deficit.
4. PPWSL exempts itself from the USA "**Designated Player**" (DP) and "**Extra Hitter**" (EH) rules.
5. PPWSL "**run ahead**" rule: If a team is ahead by 15 runs after an official game, the "run ahead" rule shall be called and the official game will end and the score recorded. If they wish, teams may continue playing unofficially.
6. PPWSL exempts itself from the USA "**blood**" rule.
7. PPWSL uses a safety base at first base.
8. All players must stay in the **dugout**. Only the base coaches, batter, on-deck batter and up to 10 defensive players may be on the field.
9. **Coaches and scorekeepers** in the dugout must meet the PPWSL eligibility requirements as defined in the Bylaws, Article III, Organization A: Membership. No one other than individuals who meet the eligibility requirements may enter the dugout or shout directions onto the field.
10. **Forfeit and Darkness Rules**
 - a. **Game time** is 6:20 PM; **forfeit time** is 6:35 PM, no exceptions. The umpire will call the forfeit; the umpire's watch governs.

- b. All official league games must be played on the scheduled field or, if agreeable to both teams and the umpire, on another **official diamond**.
- c. **If the umpire does not arrive** by 6:35 PM., the game will be postponed, any play will be unofficial and the game must be rescheduled. An exception will be made if both teams agree to play. The umpires will not be paid. The game can proceed with one umpire if necessary.
- d. **Rainouts** or poor field conditions due to bad weather are decided by the home team prior to 4:00 PM. The home team is responsible for canceling the scheduled umpires and contacting the opposing team. The new scheduled playing date is the next one available and is not subject to the teams' approval.
- e. If a team must forfeit a game, the team rep. must contact the opposing team's rep. via phone and email by 2:00pm. The forfeiting team must call the head umpire to cancel the scheduled umpires and must email the League scorekeeper with a copy to the opposing team.
- f. The following **Darkness Rules** apply for the 2021 season:
 The game must end according to this specified time frame. Teams may continue to play unofficially. Official game score will be the one recorded at the end of the official game. Applicable darkness rule will be indicated on game schedules. The umpire's watch governs.

The rules is as follows:

Weeks	Official Game	No new inning begin after:
Pre-season	3 complete innings	7:30 PM
1st week of the season through the 3rd Sunday in May	3 complete innings	7:45 PM
The 3rd Sunday in May through the last Sunday in May	4 complete innings	8:00 PM
From the last Sunday in May through the first Sunday in August	4 complete innings	8:20 PM
The first Sunday in August through the third Sunday in August	4 complete innings	8:00 PM
The third Sunday in August through the rest of the season	3 complete innings	7:45 PM

11. Uniforms and Equipment

- a. **Uniforms:** All players on the field must be in uniform by **the first Monday in June**. Uniforms consist of (at least) shirts of similar color with numbers on the back and the team name. Opposing teams may request that the umpire disqualify a player out of uniform.
- b. No loose or exposed **jewelry** is allowed. If a player refuses to remove jewelry that the umpire judges to be dangerous, the player will be ejected from the game.
- c. No metal **cleats** or spikes are allowed.
- d. **Batting helmets** are optional.
- e. It is each team's responsibility to provide its own **first aid kit** and ice packs.
- f. The home team is responsible for retrieving a complete set of bases, including a pitcher's rubber (24"x 6") and a home plate from the league storage unit and supplying this equipment for the game. Should the home team not retrieve and supply this equipment, the visiting team has the option of retrieving and supplying the equipment and thereby gaining the home advantage. If the equipment cannot be retrieved by either team, the home team will be penalized by forfeit. The Home team is responsible for putting the equipment away at the end of the game.
- g. Before each game, the umpire is responsible for measuring the correct distance between bases, pitching rubber, and home plate. The distances are: 40 feet from the back point of home plate to the front of the pitcher's rubber and 60 feet between the bases.

The umpires must remeasure the fields upon the joint request of both teams.
- h. All other equipment requirements, including bat regulations, are governed by USA softball rules.

12. Roster Regulations:

Each team must submit one copy of its roster to the League Secretary via email. The roster must list 20 players, *as well as non-playing coaches and managers*. The roster must be submitted to the league by the **first Monday in June on time and complete**. Each team member must submit a liability waiver online by the first Monday in June. Paper waivers are not accepted. If a roster and/or set of waivers is not in on time and complete, the offending team will incur a penalty as follows: each batter comes to the plate at the next played game with a one-strike count each time they come to bat. The penalty is repeated for each game thereafter until the complete roster and/or set of waivers is received. An offending team must play at least one game under penalty. If a team's completed roster and/or set of waivers is not received by the second Monday in June, the offending team will incur an additional penalty as follows: that team begins the next played game with a three (3) run deficit. If a team's completed roster and/or set of waivers is not received by the third Monday in June, the offending team will incur a penalty as follows: forfeiture of the next played game.

- a) Teams may not remove a pitcher rating from a player on their roster who has been given such a rating either from tryouts or another team UNLESS that player is listed as having a rating change AND that change is approved by the league at the ratings challenge meeting.

A COMPLETE ROSTER INCLUDES EVERY PLAYER'S NAME, SHIRT NUMBER, AND LETTER ABILITY RATING.

- a. **Liability Waiver:** All players must sign a liability waiver form in order to participate in the league. New players will be asked to sign the waiver prior to being evaluated. Returning players must sign waivers prior to practicing. The waivers must be submitted to the League Secretary via email or hand delivery with the Final Rosters.
 - b. **Age minimum:** Players must be at least 18 years of age.
 - c. **One team rule:** A player's name may not appear on more than one roster.
 - d. **Roster preparation:** In preparation for completing the rosters and for the new-player draft in April, each team must deliver to the League Secretary one copy of its team list with the names of non-returning players removed by the first Monday in March. If a team fails to deliver the team list by this date, the offending team will incur a penalty as follows: each batter comes to the plate at the next played game with a one-strike count each time they come to bat.
 - e. **Roster closing deadline:** No changes in the roster will be permitted after **the first Monday in June** except if a player is replaced by another from the pool of available players. After the initial pool distribution and up to **the last Monday of June**, a team must fill vacancies with players of the same rating; or if none of the same rating are left in the pool, with the highest-rated player one rating below; or if none of one rating below are left in the pool, with the lowest-rated player one rating above. Any players added to a team's roster must be reported at the next league meeting and listed in the minutes. A new player has three (3) weeks from the date they joined a team to get a uniform.
- 13. Tournament requirement:** In order to play in the postseason tournament, a player must have played in at least six (6) regular season games when a team has played fourteen (14) season games, unless exempted because of illness, injury, pregnancy or the death and/or illness of a close family member. When a team has played a twelve (12) or thirteen (13) game season then a player must have played in at least five (5) games; when a team has played a ten (10) or (11) game season then a player must have played in at least four (4) games. Player/coaches may also be exempted.
- a. Tournament player exemptions must be submitted to the President and Vice President two weeks before the tournament prep meeting held in August ("August meeting")
 - b. The list of proposed exempted players must be distributed to all teams via email one week prior to the August meeting.
 - c. Teams may challenge a given player's proposed exempt status at the August meeting.
- 14. Sponsors:** No sponsor is responsible for the actions of their team, as a group or individual, nor do they decide or direct the action of the team. The individual team must direct itself. (See also Uniforms rule 10 a.)

III: PROTESTS

1. *Protests of a Game:*

When a protest is made over misinterpretation of a playing rule the protesting team must, before the next pitch, tell both the coach of the other team and the umpire that they are playing the game under protest. Protests related to ineligible or illegal players can be made at any point during the game. "Under Protest" must be written in both teams' scorebooks and the umpire must sign both books.

- a. ***Protests of USA Rule:*** A written protest must be sent within 48 hours to Tony Ferrazo, Brooklyn Meadows Umpiring Association, 2047 Oakmere Drive, Baldwin, New York 11510. Mr. Ferrazo can be reached at (917) 721-1114.
- b. ***Protests of League Rules and Regulations:*** A team protesting any League Rule or Regulation must send a written protest to the Chairperson of the Disputes Committee by email within 24 hours of any alleged violation. (The other team involved in the dispute may also send the Chairperson a written statement within the same time frame). The Committee must consult and render a decision within 72 hours of receiving a protest and notify the teams involved and the Executive Committee of such decision.

2. ***Non-game Protest:*** Issues covered by League Rules but not related to a particular game, should be brought before the next league meeting.

3. ***Uncharted Territory:*** Issues not covered by League Rules should be sent to the Disputes Committee for at least preliminary consideration.

For both III. 1. and III 2., the Disputes Committee Chair should be notified by phone or email.

4. ***Disputes Committee Proceedings:*** The parties to protest are welcome to attend the meeting, but they are not required to.

The Chairperson of the committee is listed in the League Rules each year, together with their email, and phone. This information is also listed at the bottom of the league contact list.

If any of the six members of the committee are teams involved in a dispute, they should not take part in the consideration and resolution of that particular protest.

There is a committee to handle both team disputes and player disputes. Disputes involving league rules, guidelines or decisions shall be directed to the league itself. Above are the procedures for filing a dispute. The Disputes Committee consists of the following teams:

In Odd Years: Beavers, Crescendo, Jaguars, Phoenix, Rebels and Thunder

In Even Years: Backlash, Bombers, Diamonds, Flamingos, Las Fuertes and Titans

Disputes Committee Chair 2021: TBD

If the dispute involves any of the six members of the team on the committee, that team will withdraw from the proceedings for that dispute. If the Committee Chair is on the team that is involved in the dispute, the League President shall function as Chair for that dispute. If the

League President is on the team that is involved in the dispute, the League Vice President shall function as Chair for that dispute. Disputes involving USA Rules are protested according to USA Official Softball Rules.

IV: LEAGUE MEETING AND POLICY RULES

1. Neither the league nor any of its officials may be held responsible for any ***injuries*** that may occur to any member of the league during the playing season. (See also "liability waiver" rule, 11 a.)
2. Each team is required to have a ***representative at all meetings***. Only current team members, managers, or coaches may represent the team. It is the team's responsibility to know the date, time and location of each meeting and to have a representative there. Attendance is tracked on an annual (calendar) basis and absences and associated penalties carry over to the following season.

If a team misses more than two (2) league meetings during the calendar year, the offending team will incur a penalty as follows: that team begins the next played game, even if such game is played in the next calendar year, with a three (3) run deficit (i.e. the penalty is assessed upon the team's third missed meeting). If an offending team misses any meeting thereafter, the offending team will incur a penalty as follows: that team begins the next played game with a three (3) run deficit.

3. ***Spokespersons***: Only league members appointed or designated by the league at an official league meeting may speak or conduct business on behalf of the league.
4. ***Bylaws***: The league is governed by its bylaws, available on request to any league member from the president or secretary.
5. ***Draft Rules***: The procedure for drafting new and returning players is governed by the League New Player Draft Protocol, available on request to any league member from the president or secretary.
6. ***Tournament Rules***: The League Tournament is governed by the Tournament Guidelines, to be distributed to the team reps prior to the League Tournament.
7. All teams will be required to take ***minutes of the meetings*** on a rotational basis, schedule to be distributed at the January meeting. Minutes of the previous meeting shall be accepted at the beginning of each league meeting. Minutes shall always include an agenda for the next meeting if available. Attendance must be recorded at each meeting and included in the minutes. The recorder must email copies of the minutes to the official representative for each team (the first person listed on each team on the Contact List including the President). The recorder must email copies of the minutes to the official representative for each team so that they are received at least one week prior to the meeting. Failure to do so will result in the recorder's team incurring a penalty as follows: the recorder's team begins the next played game with a three (3) run deficit.
8. All league matters, i.e.: policies, rule changes, etc. must be discussed with teams prior to

adoption at the league meeting. No decisions regarding league matters are to be made via phone polls. **Special meetings** may be called as necessary to address urgent business.

9. Teams may not remove a pitcher rating from a player on their roster who has been given such a rating either from tryouts or another team **UNLESS** that player is listed as having a rating change **AND** that change is approved by the league at the ratings challenge meeting.
10. The **League fee** for 2021 is \$1,500.00 per team.

The full balance is due by **the second Wednesday in May**. Failure to meet this deadline will result in the offending team incurring a penalty as follows: (i) each batter will come to the plate at the next played game with a one-strike count each time they comes to bat and (ii) starting that same game with a three (3) run deficit. If the full balance is not received by the League Treasurer by the following Friday, the offending team will incur a penalty as follows: forfeiture of the next played game. Further games will be forfeited until the fee is paid in full. An offending team must play at least one game under penalty.