

2009 SFEA Men's Softball League Rules

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. S.F.E.A. male employees and male spouses of employees are eligible to play.
2. S.F.E.A. is not responsible for any injuries sustained while you are participating in any S.F.E.A.-sponsored activity. More severe injuries should be documented using the S.F.E.A. Accident Investigation Form. An electronic form is available on the SFEA website (under "Sports Leagues").
3. Absolutely no alcoholic beverages are allowed in the park. This rule will be strictly enforced by the custodian.
4. One Umpire will be furnished by the local Umpires Association for each regular season and playoff game. The only exception to this rule will be for the championship round in which two umpires will be assigned to each game. The umpires are responsible for all bases, application of the rules, player safety, and maintaining the "official" score of the game. If an umpire is not present for a game, the game may be played if both captains agree to "elect" an umpire. If both captains do not agree, the game will be subject to rescheduling similar to the game being rained out. See Section IV-Rescheduling.
5. The captain of the winning team will be responsible for sending your game score via State Farm Forms no later than NOON after the day of your game.
<http://sfeuc.opr.statefarm.org/ActivitiesFree/sportsindivpage.asp?sport=Softball%20-%20Men>
6. The leagues will play on Diamond #1, Diamond #3, and Diamond #2 if needed (5:30 & 6:30 only) at State Farm Park. Game times are 5:30, 6:30, 7:30, and 8:30 on Diamonds #1 & #3.
7. When a team captain is on vacation, please provide the League Officer a name of an alternate captain for when you are gone. Team Captains are responsible for communicating any game time or location changes to their respective teams. This will help your team not miss any important league information sent on Outlook.

II. ROSTERS & SIGN-UP

1. MOVE UP POLICY
Any B League team finishing first or second in the playoffs will be required to move up to the A League the following year.

MOVE DOWN POLICY
No team finishing with a .500 or better record in the A League will be permitted to move to the B League the following year.
2. Each individual on the team roster must pay an entry fee of \$14.00 for full time players, and \$7 for subs. Payments should be collected by the individual's team captain, who should then submit ONE team payment with roster to the S.F.E.A. office.

3. All teams will be required to carry a minimum number of 13 full time players on their roster. Exceptions may be approved by the league Officers and S.F.E.A. if sufficient players do not exist for placement on any team not meeting the minimum. Individual player placements may occur in the following manner: The teams with less than 13 FT players on their roster will get placements first. If all teams in a preferred league have 13 FT rostered players already, then individual players will be placed randomly.
 - All spouse employees will need to be Full Time players
 - A maximum of five spouse players will be permitted on a roster
4. Through individual enrollments, if 13 players are available, then these players may be assigned to form a new team in a league that will best fit the needs of the average skill level of the majority of the individuals enrolled without a team and to best balance the number of teams in the divisions to be formed.
5. **Each individual may participate on one Monday – Wednesday night team and one Thursday night team.**
6. Once the season has begun, a player may not switch teams unless approved by the team captains involved and approval is granted by the league officers.
7. Players may be added to the roster during the season only if:
 1. A new player is a new employee or a transfer. These individuals will be placed on a team if a willing team can be found. Teams are not required to accept sign-ups after the start of the season, unless their roster is under the minimum number. Any late sign up not finding a team will receive a full refund.
 2. Players that were already State Farm employees in Bloomington and did not sign up in the preseason can only be added if a team has a legitimate need for players (i.e. injuries, transfers out, etc.). All additions must be approved by the League Officers.
 3. Each player added is required to send the entry fee to activities before beginning play. After the first full week of June, no roster additions will be permitted.

III. LEAGUE STRUCTURE AND PLAYOFF PROCEDURES

1. All leagues will play a 12 regular season game schedule (weather permitting). Games will be played during the assigned night unless rainouts begin to pose a threat to the determination of playoffs and/or playoffs themselves. If this occurs, some Friday and Saturday games may become necessary in order to complete the season or complete the playoffs. Captains will be notified by the league Officers if Friday and/or Saturday games become necessary. See Section IV - Rescheduling
2. The playoffs will start on the earliest possible date following the end of the completion of the regular season or no later than the second week of August. If not all of the scheduled rain dates are used, the playoffs will be moved up. Based on the number of rainouts that occur and field availability, the regular season may be shortened to provide time to complete the post-season playoffs.
3. Determination of Final Standings and seeding for post-season for playoff games:
 1. Winning Percentage;
 2. Head to head record among teams tied;
 3. Winning percentage of teams tied;
 4. Run differential between teams tied (Runs Scored - Runs Allowed);
 5. Runs allowed among teams tied;
 6. Runs scored among teams tied;
 7. Coin flip

4. A post season Double Elimination tournament will be conducted for each league to determine league champion:
 - Top six teams will qualify
 - Seeds 1 and 2 will receive first round byes
 - Highest seeded team will have the choice of home/visitor for each playoff game
5. The one hour time limit will apply to all playoff games with the exception of the Championship round.
6. If a league has less than 6 teams available for the end-of-year tournament, the top 4 teams will make the tournament.

IV. RESCHEDULING

1. In case of questionable or inclement weather on the day of the game, **YOU SHOULD CALL THE SPORTS HOTLINE AT 766-1699** after 3:15 PM to see if your game has been postponed. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE PARK, THE ACTIVITIES OFFICE, OR THE LEAGUE OFFICERS. **Never assume a game is rained out.**
2. After games have started for the evening, it is the responsibility of the umpires to call the games. Once a game is postponed on a particular field, ALL the games scheduled on that particular field are postponed for the evening. In this case the hotline will be updated with specific field cancellation information as soon as the games are called off.

As an example, assume that the 5:30 games on fields 1 and 3 had just begun when it started to rain. Field 1 was able to take more water so the games continued on that field. Field 3, on the other hand was determined by the umpire to be not playable. So the games on Field 3 would be cancelled for the entire evening while the games on Field 1 and Field 2 would continue. In this situation, the sports hotline would be updated to state that only games scheduled for Field 3 are cancelled. So it is extremely important to listen to the Sports Hotline (766-1699) for specific field cancellation information.

3. Regularly scheduled games will only be rescheduled by the league officers. The only valid reasons for rescheduling would be a company activity that affects the entire league or inclement weather.
4. Teams wishing to reschedule may do so only after discussion and acceptance by all involved captains and the league officers. Written (Outlook) confirmation must be submitted to all the captains involved, league officers, and the S.F.E.A. board member 2 weeks before the originally scheduled game.
5. Games needing to be rescheduled due to rain or other causes shall be done by taking the next available rain date. See your schedule.
6. If all rain dates are used, games will be scheduled on other open nights, including Friday and Saturday. The playoffs will start no later than the second week of August.
7. If a Heat Advisory is in effect, State Farm usually notifies all employees during working hours. It is up to the captains as to whether or not your team plays that day. If one captain is not willing to play due to the heat, the game will be forfeited by that team. Both captains must agree not to play due to the heat in order to have the game rescheduled. Make ups will be rescheduled similar to rainouts.

8. If your team needs to forfeit, please contact the opposing captain (and their back-up – listed on the team roster located on the SFEA website), your league officer, and Tom Nolin (umpire head) by 2:00 on the day you are scheduled to play. If your team forfeits prior to the scheduled game and the game gets rained out, the forfeit will no longer be in effect and you are eligible to play in the scheduled make-up game.

V. LEAGUE AWARDS

1. Plaques or cash (1st place: \$17 per FT player, 2nd place: \$15 per FT player) will be awarded to each member of the championship and 2nd place teams in each league as determined by the post-season playoffs (or regular season, if a league is not holding post season play). Only players listed as “Full Time” are eligible for awards.

VI. LINEUPS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

1. Nine players is the minimum number required to avoid a forfeit.
2. A team has 5 minutes from the official start of the 5:30 game to field at least **nine** men. If at the end of 5 minutes a team does not have the minimum number of men, the game will be declared a forfeit by the umpire. In a situation where both teams cannot meet the above requirements, both teams will forfeit the game and each team will be credited with a loss. **There is no grace period for the remaining games.**
3. If 9 or 10 players are present, they must be included in the batting order and they must play in the field. A player may not play in the field if he is not in the batting order.
4. Optionally, a team may include an unlimited number of hitters in their batting order, provided no more than 10 play in the field.
5. If a team begins the game with less than 10 players, the batting order will consist of 9 players. The team will not be penalized with outs for the vacant spots in the order. The team is able to proceed through the order in the same manner that a 10 or more player lineup would.
6. If a player is removed, disqualified, or ejected from a game, and there is no substitute for that player, an automatic out will be given to the team every time the ejected player is due to bat. If a team loses a player for any other reason (Injury, work related issues, and emergencies), and does not have a substitute available, the team will not be penalized with the automatic out.
7. A player who is not in the batting order at the start of a game may be added to the lineup at any time during the game provided he is added only at the **end** of the order.
8. A player may be withdrawn and re-enter the game one time. His place in the batting order shall not bring him to bat sooner than if he had remained in the game.

VII. RULES PERTAINING TO PLAY

1. Official A.S.A. slow pitch rules will apply unless modified by these rules and regulations set forth below.
2. Metal spiked baseball shoes are **PROHIBITED**. Anyone wearing these types of shoes will be automatically disqualified from the game.

3. Only ASA approved softball bats can be used. Anyone found using an illegal bat will be automatically disqualified from the game and rule #6 in Section VI will be enforced.

In determining whether a bat with a dent should be legal or not, ask the umpire to utilize their bat ring to slide over the barrel of the bat. Should the bat ring continue to slide over the entire barrel, the bat is legal. If not, the bat is illegal and cannot be used.

If a batter uses an illegal bat and reaches base safely, the following penalty is enforced:

- If noticed before a pitch is thrown to the next batter, the umpire will rule the batter who used the illegal bat and is now on base out. The bat is removed from the game, any runner(s) that were put out prior to the infraction remains out. All runners advancing as a result of the batted ball are returned to their bases.
 - There is no penalty for the current batter unless a pitch is thrown to this batter. If that batter is using the illegal bat, he will then be called out. The first player using the illegal bat has no penalty.
4. A 20" by 38" mat will be used to determine balls and strikes. The "plate" is never a strike.
 5. Batters will begin with a count of one ball and one strike.
 6. After a batter has two strikes against him, the batter will be allowed to hit only one foul ball. A second foul ball hit will result in the batter being called out.
 7. A six to twelve foot arc limit will be imposed on all pitches.
 8. A regulation game consists of 7 innings. Any decision to halt a game after it has begun is solely up to the umpire's discretion.
 9. A 20 run rule after 3 innings and 15 runs after 4 innings and 10 after 5 innings will be imposed on all league and playoff games.
 10. An hour time restriction will apply to all regular season games. No inning of any game shall start after one hour of play. Any inning which started **prior** to an hour, will be played to completion.
 11. Any game called at the end of 5 or more innings on account of rain or darkness will be considered a complete game. Games not going 5 innings (4 ½ with home team ahead), will be rescheduled (if necessary) and replayed from the beginning of the game.
 12. If after 7 innings, the score is tied, extra innings may be completed as long as they remain under the time limit for games. Once the time limit has been reached and the score is tied, the game shall be declared a tie.
 13. Courtesy runners are **NOT** permitted subject to the following exception: 1) If a player is injured during the game; 2) if the umpire and opposing team are notified prior to the start of the game that a player needs a courtesy runner due to injury or health related causes. In only these cases, a courtesy runner may be used for that player. Whenever the player reaches base safely, the captain will replace him at the conclusion of the play with the player who made the most recent out.
 14. All plays at home plate **will be force outs**.
 - An alternate home plate will be used for all men's softball games in order to increase safety for those playing. The alternate home plate is for the use of runners only.

- Runners must touch the alternate home plate located adjacent to the right-handed batters box in order to be safe at home.
- The defensive player MUST use the original home plate on plays at home. **The defensive player cannot use the alternate home plate as a base.**
- If the catcher solely uses the alternate home plate as a base, the base runner will be safe regardless of whether the ball reaches the alternate home plate prior to the runner.
- Should a defensive player touch the alternate home plate and still touch the original home plate before the runner reaches the alternate home plate, the runner would be out.
- A white chalk line approximately eight feet in length will bisect both the third base and alternate home plate lines perpendicularly at a point 20 feet from home plate. Once a runner crosses this line, the defensive player must touch home plate while in possession of the ball and activate the force out. **The runner cannot be tagged out once they cross the line.**
- If the runner crosses the line and then makes a move back to third, he will be immediately called out. However, **the ball will remain live** until time is called.
- If the runner crosses the line, continues to run the original foul line, and interferes with the fielder taking the throw at, and in contact with, the original home plate, a dead ball shall be declared and the runner is out.
- If a runner has not crossed the line he may retreat to third base at his own risk.
- The runner cannot at anytime use the original home plate. If the runner touches the original home plate, the runner will be out and the ball will remain live.

15. There will be a one up home run policy per team for each game. The limits are as follows:

- A League – 4 initial home run per team
- B League – 2 initial home runs per team

Once a team reaches the initial limit of home runs, they cannot hit another one until their opponent also hits the initial limit. Once that occurs, each team can only hit one home run more than their opponent currently has.

Example as follows: Once Team A hits their limit of home runs then Team B must hit their limit of home runs before any additional home runs can be hit. Once that occurs, both teams need to be within one home run of each other for the remainder of the game.

Any home runs above the current allowable at that point in the game will be an OUT. Once the initial home run limit is hit, there is no home run cap for the remainder of the game (however, each team still needs to be within one home run of the other team).

Inside the park home runs or four base awards (tipping a ball over the fence) do not count against this total.

16. On any batted ball hit over the fence for a home run or four base award, a dead ball will be called and the batter and all runners will be credited with the score. The batter and runners do not need to run the bases. Note: This eliminates any runner appeal plays and will save game time.

17. A safety bag will be used at first base and the following rules will apply:

- **On any play** at first base, where the batter would normally be forced out at first base, the batter must use the safety bag (orange) and the fielder must use the normal first base (white).
- In the case of a force out, the batter must use only the safety bag (orange). The batter is automatically ruled out if he does not use the safety bag. The fielder must touch the normal first base in order to have the batter ruled out. Exception: if a play is being made from first base foul territory, or a missed throw pulls the defensive player into foul territory, the runner may touch the white portion of the base and be safe.

- Once a runner has passed first base the base now becomes one base made of a colored portion and a white portion, 30 by 15 vs. 15 by 15. See examples below.
 1. When tagging up on a fly ball, the white or colored portion may be used. When the runner has left early the defense may use the white or colored portion on a live ball appeal.
 2. On balls hit to the outfield with no play on the batter-runner advancing to first base, the batter-runner may touch the white or colored portion. Should the batter-runner return, the runner may return to the white or colored portion.
 3. When a runner is on first base, the runner may use the white or colored portion.
18. Fake tags are considered obstruction if the runners are deceived thus impeding their progress to the next base. Continued fake tags could result in an ejection. In flagrant cases where a player is forced to slide because of a fake tag, the offending player will be ejected without warning. Once obstruction is called, play continues. The obstructed runner and each runner affected by the obstruction will always be awarded the base or bases they would of reached if there had not been any obstruction.
19. For regular season games a coin flip will determine the home and visitor team assignments. The team winning the coin toss will have the choice of being the home or visiting team.

VIII. SPORTSMANSHIP

1. If a player throws the bat intentionally or in anger, the player will be ejected from the game. If the bat slips from the batter's hands, there is no penalty unless the discarded bat prevents the defense from making a play on the ball. Interference will then be ruled. If, however, the bat slips from the batter's hands repeatedly, a dead ball will be called and the batter will be called out.
2. When a defensive player has the ball, or is about to catch a thrown ball, the runner is out on interference if he remains on his feet and crashes into the defensive player (usually with a forearm or shoulder down).
 - The ball is dead and all players must return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.
 - If in the judgment of the umpire, it was an attempt to break up an obvious double play, the immediate succeeding runner will be called out.
 - If the crash occurs **after** the runner was called out, the runner closest to home plate will also be declared out.
 - If an obstructed runner crashes into a fielder holding the ball, the obstruction call will be ignored and the runner will be called out.
 - If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender will be ejected.
3. A player who has been ejected from a game is automatically disqualified from playing in the next scheduled game. **NOTE: If the ejected player is a spouse of an employee, that player will be automatically disqualified for the remainder of the season.**
4. If a team drops to eight players, the game will end in a forfeit
5. A player may be suspended for unnecessary roughness or unsportsmanlike conduct at the discretion of the umpire. If the conduct is of a very serious nature, the umpire may suggest permanent suspension of the player to the league Officers.
6. If a player is ejected from a game two times in one season, he will be automatically disqualified from the league.

7. Any team found to be playing a scheduled game with a non-roster player will forfeit not only that game, but all games played up to that game. If a player is found to be on one team roster, but plays on another team (and is not a roster player), then the team that he played on as a non-roster player will forfeit **ALL** previously played games. If the player is listed on multiple team rosters, **BOTH** teams will forfeit their games up to the point that it is discovered that the player is playing illegally. Team captains can then decide which team the player will remain on, and he will be taken off the roster of the other team.

Team rosters will be provided at the ballpark and can be checked by the umpire and opposing manager. If the eligibility of a player is questioned before or during a game, the umpire may ask for verification from the player in question. This verification can consist of a driver's license, ID Badge, or SFEA Activities Card. If further questions arise, the umpire will write the name of the player in question on the back of the scorecard, have both captains sign it, and the opposing captain can send the information to the league the following day. **Once the final out is made and the game is over, the result stands and there will be no further investigation.**

If it has been determined that the team did play with a non-roster player, the league officers will be responsible for adjusting the standings, and awarding loses to previously played games. This will also include adding wins to previous opponents.

8. Any questions on a call made by the umpires should be made by the team captain only!
SWEARING AND/OR DEROGATORY REMARKS MADE TO THE UMPIRES WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND WILL BE GROUNDS FOR IMMEDIATE EJECTION AND SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT!

2009 LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION:

Officers	Norm Weldon	5-2768
	Paul Froese	5-9924
	Dustin Wilson	3-9146
S.F.E.A. Board Member	Kristen Flachsbart	6-8959
Umpire Coordinator	Tom Nolin	6-1150
Backup	Kent Warner	5-2632