

# **2018 MWR Intramural Slow Pitch Softball Rules**

**Natick Soldier Systems Center**



**2018 Official USSSA Slow Pitch Rules will be enforced unless  
otherwise noted. Rules are subject to change without notice.**

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## **1 General Regulations**

- 1.1 This is a slow-pitch softball league for fun.
- 1.2 Each dugout must be policed after each game. No cups, wrappers, clipboards or trash shall be left behind. All equipment shall be taken home or put away in the equipment shed.
- 1.3 In accordance with (IAW) AR 215-1 “The consumption of alcohol by athletes participating in athletic events or competitions just prior or during the competition is prohibited”. Alcoholic beverages may not be consumed on the field or in dugouts areas.
- 1.4 Alcoholic beverages will not be given to underage players and/or spectators.
- 1.5 Alcoholic beverages will not be consumed in the parking lot.
- 1.6 Consumption of outside alcohol is not permitted on NSSC IAW NSSC Policy Statement No. 9 – Alcohol Policy for Sports and Recreational Activities.
- 1.7 No warm-up near the food/beverage area.
- 1.8 No parking on the access road to the field.

## **2 The Commission**

- 2.1 The Commission will consist of Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and MWR appointed Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner(s), as applicable.
- 2.2 The Commission is responsible for the following:
  - 2.2.1 Creating and approving a schedule prior to the season
  - 2.2.2 Making changes to the rules prior to the season
  - 2.2.3 Enforcing the rules when conflict arises.
- 2.3 The Commission will hear and decide the outcome of any protests, tiebreakers or player eligibility.
- 2.4 The two teams involved will not have a vote in deciding the dispute.
- 2.5 In the event that conflicts are unable to be resolved by the Coaches, the Commissioner will have final authority.
- 2.6 In the event of a conflict where the Commissioner is a player or coach of a team involved, the final authority will reside with the MWR Representative.

### **3 Player Eligibility**

- 3.1 Participation in MWR activities are primarily for Active Duty Military personnel assigned to NSSC as well as their family members. Secondary participants are members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve, Retirees, and their associated Family members. Other eligible participants are DOD civilians and contractors working at NSSC. Family members and DOD civilians must be at least 18 years of age to participate in NSSC sports programs.
- 3.2 In addition to the Player Eligibility above, teams are allowed players on their roster that do not meet the player eligibility rule (but over 18 years old).
  - 3.2.1 Only two of the exception players can be in the batting order/in the field at once
  - 3.2.2 Once the roster deadline is reached, no new non-employees may participate in league play.
- 3.3 Exceptions – Active duty military members may participate in the league play upon being stationed at Natick SSC. Active duty players may additionally participate in playoff games regardless of Playoff Eligibility Requirements.
  - 3.3.1 New hires to Natick SSC may be added to a team's roster mid season, but must meet Playoff Eligibility requirements in order to participate in playoff games.
- 3.4 Playoff Eligibility: Players must play three (3) games or more during the regular season with their team in order to be eligible for the playoff games.
  - 3.4.1 If a team wins by forfeit, this shall count as a played game for all players on that winning team roster.
  - 3.4.2 If a player is available to play, but the game is rained out, this does NOT count as a played game.
  - 3.4.3 If a civilian player has not participated in a minimum of 3 games during the regular season, they may participate in playoff games: if and only if they were in TDY status during 75% of their team's scheduled games, while taking sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 into consideration.
- 3.5 ALL players must fill out and sign the MWR Player Waiver and Release Form before participating in an official game. A roster of players who have signed the form will be kept at the shack for reference, if needed. If a team picks up a player for a game (player not on team roster) that player must be on the waiver roster or complete a new form PRIOR to playing in the game.

## **4 Roster Regulations**

- 4.1 Teams have a roster limit of 30 players.
- 4.2 Preliminary rosters are due to the Commissioner by: 6 June 2018.
- 4.3 Final Rosters are due by the Friday before Playoffs start. At that time, rosters are set and no new players may be added.
  - 4.3.1 Before the Final Roster deadline, new DoD employees, summer hires and Military personnel may be added to the roster.
  - 4.3.2 Exceptions: Active Military may be added any time (See rule: 3.3).
  - 4.3.3 Roster changes must be submitted to the Commissioner by COB the day BEFORE the game for a new player to be eligible to play – this includes Military Personnel

## **5 Disbanding a Team**

- 5.1 If a team forfeits more than 3 times during a season and it seems as if more forfeits are imminent, the team shall disband and the players shall be subject to a dispersal draft
- 5.2 The dispersal draft that will be orchestrated by the Commission
- 5.3 The dispersal draft is the only manner in which players may switch teams.
- 5.4 During the draft, the team with worst record has first pick
- 5.5 The next lowest record team selects next, and so on, until all players are selected.
- 5.6 Special consideration will be given to teams with diminished rosters that are also facing forfeits due to lack of participation. These teams may get more picks or move up in the draft order despite their record.
- 5.7 Drafted players shall adhere to the minimum three (3) games played policy with the new team to be eligible for playoffs.

## **6 Game Schedule**

- 6.1 Games will typically be held on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday throughout the season.
- 6.2 Two games shall be held per day. The first game may commence as early as 1645, dependent on each team's ability to begin play. The first scheduled game will start NLT 1700. The second game may commence as early as 15 minutes following the first game but is scheduled to begin at 1815, dependent on each team's ability to begin play. The second scheduled game will start NLT 1830. Teams will be forced to forfeit if unable to begin play by NLT times, excluding weather delays.

- 6.2.2 In the event of a late game due to a tie or lack of daylight, game play will not last more than 90 minutes, based on the discretion of each coach, his/ her players, and the umpire present. The first game shall not start a new inning after 1810.
- 6.3 The schedule shall consist of each team playing every other team at least twice
- 6.4 The schedule shall be balanced so that each team has the same number of home/away games and early/late games if possible.
- 6.5 The playoffs shall begin as soon after the regular season is over as possible.
- 6.5.1 The playoff scenario may change from year-to-year and shall be voted on every year; however the typical playoff scenario is as follows:
  - 6.5.1.1 Teams are seeded by their regular season record. In the event of a tie, refer to the tiebreak rules in section 6.6
  - 6.5.1.2 1<sup>st</sup> round is single elimination
  - 6.5.1.3 2<sup>nd</sup> round is best of three games
  - 6.5.1.4 Championship is best of three games
- 6.6 Tiebreak Rules: No two teams shall occupy the same seed at the end of the year, even if they have the same record. In the event that two teams have the same record at the end of the season, the following method will be applied to determine rank:
  - 6.6.1 Head-to-head: The team that has the better record against the other team during that season shall get the better seed
  - 6.6.2 Coin Toss: If a tie still exists, the teams involved will participate in a coin toss to determine team seeding. The winner of the coin toss will have the option to determine which seed they want.

## **7 Equipment & Attire**

- 7.1 Jewelry: Jewelry may be worn at the player's own risk. Loose or dangling jewelry is strongly discouraged and will be at the Umpire's discretion.
- 7.2 No bats, balls or gloves are allowed in the coaches boxes during games.
- 7.3 **Shoes**
  - 7.3.1 Closed toe shoes are required. Gym, running shoes or rubber training shoes and single molded plastic/rubber soccer-type cleats are the only permitted footwear.
  - 7.3.2 Metal cleats or spikes of any type are not allowed.
  - 7.3.3 Shoes with screw in cleats of any kind are illegal.
  - 7.3.4 No work boots or military style boots are allowed.

7.3.5 No street shoes allowed.

#### 7.4 **Bats**

7.4.1 Bats shall be round in cross section, straight in length, and measure not more than 34 inches long, and not more than 2-1/4 inches in diameter at its largest part and its weight shall not exceed 31-1/2 ounces.

7.4.2 No “multi-walled” bats are permitted (i.e., Double Walled, Triple "Tri" Walled, etc):  
**SINGLE WALL BATS ONLY!**

7.4.3 Nothing such as a donut may be used when loosening up. “Official Softball” must be marked on bats.

7.4.4 The performance standard for all non-wooden bats will be a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.20, or less as applied under the standard USSSA Regulations. A list of approved bats is available on the USSSA website. [www.ussa.com/ussa/ussa-general/LegalBats.asp](http://www.ussa.com/ussa/ussa-general/LegalBats.asp). All composite bats will be checked against the approved listing, even if they are stamped USSSA / ASA Approved (many composite bats which were previously authorized for use have now been banned from league play). Any bat that appears to be safety hazard to the play of game, even if stamped and approved, may be reviewed by the Umpires, the Commissioner and voted on by the Commission. This league is for fun (Rule 1.1) and safety of all players is paramount.

7.4.5 The Head Umpire has the right to inspect all bats used for play (if there is a controversy about legality of the bat) prior to each game in the NSSC Softball League, by adhering to the USSSA rules concerning Legal Bats and the NSSC Softball League Rules.

7.4.6 The use of a non-conforming bat will result in a suspension from the remainder of said game and the next full game. A second time offender will be suspended for the remainder of the season.

7.4.7 Withholding the bat from inspection or direct concealment of the illegality of the bat will also result in a suspension.

#### 7.5 **Balls**

7.5.1 Balls shall be an approved USSSA regulation softball (12 inch).

7.5.2 The ball must have a COR of 0.44 or lower, and a compression of 400 pounds or lower.

#### 7.6 **Gloves**

7.6.1 Gloves will be worn by any Fielder.

7.6.2 Catchers and First Basemen may wear a glove or mitt of any size; all other Players are restricted to a finger type glove with the space between the thumb and forefinger not exceeding more than 4-1/2 inches at the top. The webbing shall not be constructed to form any type net or tray.

7.6.3 Multicolored gloves are legal.

## **8 Starting an Official Game**

- 8.1 Teams should report to the field a minimum of 15 minutes before the scheduled time of the game to fill out the scorebook.
- 8.2 The score sheet must list the player's last names, Home & Away Teams and the Date.
- 8.3 Please print legibly in the book.
- 8.4 Each team is responsible for keeping track of their own players and positions within the lineups
- 8.5 The home team is responsible for setting up the bases, making sure the field is tidy and raked. The home team of the first game is responsible for lining the field if the field is not otherwise lined (white chalk lines).
- 8.6 The home team is responsible for getting the game balls from the shed and making them available to the umpire.
- 8.6.1 Game balls are provided by the MWR (2 new balls/game).

## **9 Game Play**

### **9.1 Number of Players and AH rules**

- 9.1.1 A standard team consists of ten (10) defensive players.
- 9.1.2 A team must have at least two (2) female players in the lineup to avoid penalty.
- 9.1.3 A team may play legally with nine (9) players, provided they have at least one (1) female player in the field and lineup.
  - 9.1.3.1 A team playing with only one female will bat and field only nine (9) players and take an out at the bottom of the order (the 10<sup>th</sup> spot in the order). The female must bat in the 1<sup>st</sup> position, to allow the Umpire to track when the automatic out occurs.
- 9.1.4 A team playing with (9) players, that has 2 females playing, WILL NOT incur an out at the bottom of the order
- 9.1.5 A team of 10 may add up to 5 Additional Hitters (AH) in their lineup.
- 9.1.6 If batting Additional Hitters, the AH's must alternate male and female. If a team does not have enough females to alternate in the AH's, that team will incur an out each time a female should have been batted.
- 9.1.7 A team of 9 may not add an AH
- 9.1.8 In the case of injury (teams starting play with 9 players, then an injury), a team may play with eight (8) players, taking an automatic out for that player missing.



- 9.1.9 Players arriving late may have their name added to the bottom of the order before the team has gone through their lineup ONCE.
- 9.1.9.1 Players late to the game can only enter a game in-between half innings.
- 9.1.10 Female players may not be batted back-to-back. This also includes batting a female 1<sup>st</sup> in the lineup and last, which would result in back-to-back females batting in future innings.
- 9.2 Teams who do not have the nine (9) roster players to start a game, may pick up people who are not on their team roster (ie spectators or players from another team) to play. Teams may pick up a maximum of 4 players and can only pick up to field a team of nine (9). If a team has 8 male players and 1 female, they may pick up a second female and play with 10. Teams picking up more than 1 female can only pick up enough players to have nine (9).
- 9.2.1 Teams will not be allowed to pickup players during the playoffs.
- 9.3 Re-entry Rule**
- 9.3.1 If a coach chooses to bat more than 10 players, those players can be rotated in an out of the field at the coach's discretion.
- 9.3.2 If a coach chooses only to bat 10 players, substitutions may be made at anytime at the coach's discretion. Substitutes will bat in the lineup where the starter they are replacing was. Starters will only be allowed to reenter the game if there is an injury and there are no other team members who have not played yet.
- 9.4 Infielders:**
- 9.4.1 All infielders must come "set" on the field and may only proceed once the batter has made contact.
- 9.5 Outfielders**
- 9.5.1 Outfielders may play anywhere on the outfield grass unless the weak hitter rule applies.
- 9.6 Weak Hitter Rules**
- 9.6.1 The Weak Hitter's line has been removed from the field. When a weak hitter is at the plate the left and right fielders are to remain within 5 feet from the fence. The left-center fielder is to stay within 5 feet of the innermost pole in center field. The right-center fielder is to stay within a reasonable arc with the other outfielders. Infielders must come set on the infield dirt, no closer than the baselines, even with the bases, and no further back than the edge of the grass.
- 9.6.1 Fielders may not move towards the infield until after the batter has made contact with the ball.

## **9.7 Pitching**

- 9.7.1 The pitch must be of slow speed.
- 9.7.2 Pitched ball must be released within 5 seconds from the time the Pitcher has the ball and the batter has taken his position in the Batter's Box.
- 9.7.3 Only a definite underhand motion is permitted in the delivery of the pitch
- 9.7.4 The pitched ball must arc at least three (3) feet after leaving the pitcher's hand and before it passes any part of Home Plate.
- 9.7.5 The pitched ball shall not rise higher than twelve (12) feet above the ground.

## **9.8 Balls and Strikes**

- 9.8.1 The Batter is awarded first base when FOUR balls are called by the Umpire
- 9.8.2 The Batter is out if he/she has a third strike
- 9.8.3 The Batter is out if he/she hits two (2) fouls after two strikes, then the ball is dead (out).

## **9.9 Bat Throwing**

- 9.9.1 At the discretion of the umpire, any batter throwing a bat after batting will receive a warning.
- 9.9.2 If the batter then throws the bat a second time, the batter then may be ejected from the game.
- 9.9.3 If, in the umpire's opinion, the batter intentionally throws the bat or the bat hits and injures another player or spectator, the batter may be ejected from the game without warning and face additional suspensions from the league commissioner after reviewing all pertinent information.

## **9.10 Base Running and Sliding**

- 9.10.1 Under no circumstances will stand-up collisions, at any base, be tolerated
- 9.10.2 Sliding is strongly encouraged, but not required. HOWEVER, the responsibility of avoiding contact lies with the runner.
- 9.10.3 If, in the umpire's judgment, the runner fails to take the necessary steps to avoid contact, and causes contact, they shall call the runner out.
- 9.10.4 On double play situations, runners tagged out at second must refrain from interfering with the throw to first base. Any interference by the base runner will cause the runner going to first base to automatically be called out for runner interference.
- 9.10.5 Any excessive force used to tag a base runner out, or to force a fielder to drop a ball, will warrant an ejection.

9.10.6 There are no fake tags under any condition. A player may be ejected without warning for doing a fake tag.

9.10.7 A fake tag is defined as an attempt by a fielder to deceive a base runner by “faking” a tag when they do not have the ball. This increases the potential for injury and should not and will not be tolerated.

#### **9.11 Courtesy Runners:**

9.11.1 Courtesy Runner will only be used for a player whose injury (legitimate / chronic) occurred going to 1st base. If a player has a previous injury and informs the umpire prior to batting, then they will be authorized a courtesy runner upon reaching first base.

9.11.2 If a player can make it to second or third base on their own power, they will not be granted a courtesy runner unless the injury occurs while running from first base to second base or from second base to third base.

9.11.3 Falsely claiming injury will result in that player being ejected from the game.

9.11.4 If in a subsequent at bat by the player that was awarded a courtesy runner earlier in the game gets a hit that allows him to proceed past first base, he or she will not be granted a courtesy runner. If on an overthrow or over play that the ball goes out of bounds and the player awarded an extra base by the umpire, the above rule is moot.

### **10 Field Dimensions:**

10.1 THE PLAYING FIELD is the area within which the ball may be legally played or fielded. The field shall be an area within an established minimum radius, from Home Plate to the far boundaries between the foul lines.

10.2 SPECIAL GROUND RULES may be made when the field is less than the official minimum dimensions, which are: 300 ft for men

10.3 From USSSA: Section 2, A-D: It is optional that when an outfield fence is less than the legal radius is of such height, to warrant consideration, leagues may determine whether or not to award the batter less than four bases (homerun) on a fair ball that goes over the fence.

10.4 Only softballs hit between the flagpoles in left and right center field (and over the fence) will be considered home runs. A softball hit over the net of the left field fence, will be awarded a Home Run. Players hitting balls to the left of the left center flag and to the right of the right center flag will be awarded two bases, a ground rule double.

10.5 The batting team is responsible for retrieving game balls that go out of play or over the fences.

### **11 Ejections:**

- 11.1 If a player is ejected from the game for any reason, the ejected Player's team must have a substitute available to replace the ejected Player or that team will forfeit the game.
- 11.2 If a player is ejected from a game, they will be suspended for the next scheduled game as well. If a player is ejected twice, that player is suspended for the rest of the season, to include playoffs.

## **12 Weather**

- 12.1 In the case of a game called due to weather during the regular season, a game is considered complete after 4 full innings (or the home team winning after 3 ½ innings). During playoffs, play will continue and finished as necessary to the full 7 innings.
- 12.2 Rainouts will be made up on the first available Monday following the postponed game. They are to be played at the same times as the regularly scheduled games.
  - 12.2.1 Exception – Makeup game re-schedules will also be based on Active duty availability.
- 12.3 If weather prohibits the playing of a regularly scheduled game, MWR will notify the respective coaches NLT 1430 the day of the game and earlier if possible.
- 12.4 NSSC Softball Umpires have the authority to cancel any games at any time due to inclement weather.
- 12.5 If lightning is observed, game play will be halted and the field will be cleared of all players. Game play cannot resume for at least 30 minutes. If lightning is sighted during the 30-minute delay of game, then a new 30-minute timer starts.

### **13 Protested Game**

- 13.1 The Natick SSC Softball League is an intramural activity. Any and all disagreements that arise during game play are to be handled in a respectable and appropriate manner. Dispute outcomes are to be coordinated by no more than three individuals. These consist of one coach from each team and the umpire present. If the Commissioner or Assistant Commissioner (if applicable) are present, they may be referred to for decisions or rule interpretations.
- 13.2 The Commission will hear any protests that arise within the course of the season that could not be resolved between coaches.
- 13.3 The two teams involved will not have a vote in deciding the dispute.
- 13.4 For gameplay calls by an Umpire, Teams must address the issue with the umpire at the time of the infraction/call. For procedural issues or other items in the rule book, Teams have ONE (1) full inning from the time of the proposed infraction to notify the Umpire of a protest. If the infraction occurs during the last inning of play, teams have twenty (20) minutes to notify the Umpire (if still present), the League Commissioner or the MWR Softball POC. If none of the above are present, the team has until NOON of the next day to notify the League Commissioner of a protest.
- 13.5 All formal protests must be in writing and the reason for the protest MUST have been addressed during the playing of the game. No protest may be filed if the issue was not addressed during the game.
- 13.6 A formal Protest should contain the following information:
- a) The date, time, and place of the Game.
  - b) Names of the Umpires and Scorekeeper.
  - c) The Rule and Section of the Official rules, or Local League Rules adopted General Rules under which the Protest is being filed.
  - d) The decision and/or conditions surrounding the cause for the protest.
  - e) All essential facts involved in the matter of the Protest.
- 13.7 The Commissioner, once having all the required information of a Protest, will contact the Coaches and provide them with the information, and the coaches will vote on a decision, majority vote will decide. The Coaches from the two teams involved in the protest will not have a vote. If there is a tie vote, the decision will be made by the MWR Softball League POC. During playoffs, all protests will be decided by the MWR Softball League POC and the Senior Umpire.
- 13.8 The decision made on a Protested Game may result in the following:
- a) The protest is found invalid and Game's score stands as played.

- b) Protest allowed, Game resumed at point of Protest, as a Suspended Game.
- c) Protest allowed, Game forfeited in favor of the Team not at fault.

## **14 Player Conduct:**

- 14.1 Coaches are responsible for the conduct of all players on their teams. Good judgment and proper sportsmanship goes a long way toward maintaining a sane and enjoyable atmosphere for everyone to enjoy. As allows, all protests and discussions on questionable call with the umpire, coaches or players must be voiced to the umpires by the respective coaches only.

## **15 Mercy Rule**

- 15.1 A game is official when the home team leads after 4.5 innings by 15 runs or more, or when the visiting team leads after 5 innings by 15 runs or more.
- 15.2 During innings 1-6, an inning is considered over and teams change sides once one team scores ten (10) runs in an inning. A team may only score more than 10 runs in one inning if runners are on base and the batter hits a Ground-Rule Double or Home Run, then all runs will count.
- 15.3 During the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, or the last inning of play (determined by the Umpire), teams may score as many runs as they can, regardless of if they are winning or losing.