

STONEWALL SOFTBALL

Raleigh, NC | Est. 2019

Rules and Regulations

The Rules and Regulations are available for all players to review, it is each player's responsibility to read and understand the rules of play. Players should contact their team captains for clarification on any of the rules, but if needed, Stonewall Softball League Leadership can also be contacted.

1. **PLAYING FIELD & SET-UP:** The League is responsible for determining a suitable playing field for all games and sponsored events. The League and/or its designated umpires will prepare the playing field in accordance with ASA (Amateur Softball Association) guidelines. Each Team Captain will receive a copy of the ASA rulebook.
2. **EQUIPMENT**
 - 2.1. **OFFICIAL ATTIRE:** While participating, players must wear the official League t-shirt designated for the current season – no other shirts are permitted. Players are permitted to alter their shirts; however, no alterations may infringe on the League's or sponsor's logos.
 - 2.1.1. Players may wear additional layers of clothing due to colder weather conditions, but the current season's t-shirt must still be worn.
 - 2.2. **SHOES:** Without any exceptions, players are required to wear athletic shoes when playing. It is recommended that players wear cleats; however, metal cleats are NOT allowed.
 - 2.3. **GLOVES:** All players will be required to use a functional softball glove when their team is on defense; gloves will not be provided by the League.
 - 2.4. **PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:** Players may choose to wear standard batting helmets when at bat and/or running the bases. Fielder's face shields will also be permitted when fielding. The League also reserves the right to implement a protective pitching net if deemed necessary.
 - 2.5. **BATS:** All bats will be required to be ASA softball certified (ASA stamped). The umpire has the right to check the bats before the game and remove ones that are not ASA-certified. Any removed bats must remain in a bat-bag or outside of the dugout.
 - 2.5.1. Any player caught using an illegal bat during a game will be removed from the remainder of the game.
 - 2.6. **OFFICIAL SOFTBALL:** Teams are allowed to provide an 11' 52/300 ball of their own if they would like for their female batters to use. The female batter must let the umpire know they would be using the provided ball. Otherwise the official softball will be provided by the League- it is a 12" circumference, 52/300 core slow-pitch softball.

3. PARTICIPANTS

3.1. **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:** To be considered a player, all participants must be (a) twenty-one (21) years of age or older by the date of first game; (b) properly registered through the approved registration process; and (c) sign the League liability waiver. Participants can only be on the roster of one (1) team per season within the local city League.

3.2. **OFFICIALS:** Each game will be officiated by at least one (1) certified, professional umpire, designated and furnished by the League.

3.2.1. Umpires have jurisdiction over play and may (a) call a time-out; (b) call off any game still in play at the time limit; and (c) penalize a player, including game ejection, for any reason – this includes, but is not limited to, unsportsmanlike conduct, fighting, delay of game, and excessive verbal abuse.

3.2.2. Umpires must (a) delay or end a game if lightning is seen; and (b) end a game due to darkness, rain, or other cause, at the umpire's discretion.

3.2.3. Umpires may make rulings on any points not specifically covered in the ASA rules (at the time of occurrence), but the ruling shall not be deemed as a precedent for future rulings.

3.2.4. Umpires may seek the advice of the League Leadership who can review the situation and advise on all applicable rules. If necessary, the League Leadership will consider all questions and provide advice on unsettled or unclear matters; however, decisions cannot be overturned on appeal.

3.3. TEAMS

3.3.1. **PLAYERS NEEDED TO PLAY:** Each team must have at least nine (9) players present in order to play. If a team has seven (7) rostered players in attendance, they can pick up three players, and if a team has eight (8) rostered players in attendance, they can pick up two players, and if they have nine (9) rostered players, they can pick up one player (see Rule 5.8.2 for playoff-specific rule). Less than seven rostered players in attendance will result in a forfeit.

- A pickup player's list will be available at the fields for anyone wanting additional playing time on a first come first played basis.
- Teams needing players will receive the next player in line on the list.
- Any player picked up and the missing team player shows up they will switch once the half- inning is over and can add their name at the bottom of the list again.
- Pickup players must bat at the end of the batting lineup.

3.3.2. **CONNECTED PLAYERS:** During registration, each player is permitted to choose one (1) player that they wish to be connected to on a team. Both players must name each other in the registration process, or the connection will not be considered valid.

3.3.3. **BATTING ORDER:** Team Captains must provide a copy of their team's written batting order to the official League Scorekeeper at least five (5) minutes before the scheduled game time. Batting lineup cards will be provided by the League. If a team does not supply their batting order by the required time, they will begin their first at bat with one out.

- **ADDING PLAYERS TO BATTING ORDER:** Rostered players not present when the game starts are to be removed from the original batting order. If player arrives after the game starts, regardless of inning, that player must be added to the end of the team's batting order.
- If the team is on defense when the rostered player arrives and a pickup player is on the field in their place, the pickup player and rostered player will switch once the half- inning is over. If on offense, the rostered player will immediately take over their batting order position.

3.3.4. PARTICIPATING PLAYERS: A “participating player” is any player who is present and dressed to play, unless that player is injured or has a legitimate medical condition.

- All participating players must bat in the written batting order, and are required to play a minimum of one inning in the field per game. If a player cannot bat, for whatever reason, then that player is not permitted to field.
- If a player is unable to play due to an injury or a legitimate medical condition, the player (not their captain) must speak with the Stonewall Softball Directors to approve their removal from the lineup.

3.4. BASE COACHES: Two members of the team at bat may coach first (1st) and third (3rd) base in the designated base-coaching areas. Base coaches may switch with other team members to remain in proper batting order. Base coaches may not physically assist or touch runners in any way while the ball is in play, nor can they interfere with game play – doing so will result in an out.

3.5. Only the Captain(s) may dispute calls for rule infractions with the umpires, but must accept the umpires’ final ruling.

4. REGULATION GAMES

4.1. REGULATION GAMES: To be considered a regulation game, the game must last at least fifty (50) minutes and may last a maximum of fifty (55) minutes or seven (7) innings. The game clock officially starts when the first pitch of the game is thrown, and no new inning shall begin if the game has already been played for fifty (50) minutes.

4.1.1. If a game is called according to Rule 3.2.2, the game will be considered a regulation game if four (4) full innings were completed. Otherwise, a new game may be scheduled at the discretion of the League.

4.2. RESCHEDULED GAMES: In the event that a game needs to be rescheduled due to adverse weather or any other reason, the League will inform team captains by noon on the day of the originally scheduled game. Rescheduled games will be played at the time and place determined by League Leadership. If a team fails to play at the designated time and place, then the team will receive a forfeit.

4.3. SLAUGHTER RULE

4.3.1. If a game has completed three (3) innings and the run differential is greater than or equal to twenty (20) runs; or four (4) innings and the run differential is greater than or equal to fifteen (15) runs; or five (5) innings and the run differential is greater than or equal to ten (10) runs; the umpire will end the game.

4.3.2. An umpire is not required to continue officiating of the game once the slaughter rule has already been employed.

4.3.3. Teams will be limited to scoring 10 runs per inning. When 10 runs are scored, the teams will switch as if three outs were made, except in the final inning of a game.

4.4. WINNING/LOSING: The team with the most runs at the end of the game wins. If the team winning after the top of the final inning is set to bat at the bottom of the inning (the home team), the game will end without the bottom of the inning being played. If a regulation game is ended by the umpire for any reason before the inning is completed, the recorded score will be the score at the end of the last completed inning.

4.5. TIES: If there is a tie score at the end of a regular season game, the game shall be marked as a tie. See rule 5.8.4 for playoff-specific rules.

- 4.6. **FORFEITS:** Any forfeits will count as a 0-7 loss for the forfeiting team and a 7-0 win for the opposing team.
 - 4.7. Teams will have a five (5) minute grace period from the scheduled game time for any game delay, including waiting for an arriving player. Failure to abide by this rule results in a forfeit.
 - 4.8. **RANKINGS/STANDINGS:** Calculated using approved protocol established by the League (listed below).
 - 4.8.1. Teams will be ranked by the number of wins they have. If two or more teams are tied, the tie is broken in this order:
 - Team with the least losses (ties do not count as a loss)
 - If not resolved, then by head-to-head play
 - If not resolved, then by team with highest run differential (runs scored minus runs allowed)
 - If still not resolved, then by League Leadership coin toss
5. **GAME RULES AND REGULATIONS:** The League will follow the sanctioned rules of the ASA (Amateur Softball Association). Copies of the ASA Rulebook will be available to team Captains during the kickoff meeting or at the first game of the season. Basic rules are listed below, some of which are specific to this League. Refer to the ASA rulebook for more detailed information.
- 5.1. **PITCHING:** Balls must be pitched underhand with at least one of the pitcher's feet starting on the pitching rubber. Pitched balls must reach a minimum of six (6) feet and a maximum of ten (10) feet at their peak.
 - 5.2. **BATTING**
 - 5.2.1. Batters must be within the batter's box when the ball is hit. The batter will be called out if the player hits it while outside of the box.
 - 5.2.2. Bunting is not permitted in slow-pitch softball. If the umpire deems the hit an intentional bunt, the hit will be called a foul ball.
 - 5.2.3. **HOME RUNS:** There will be a limit of two (4) out-of-the-park home runs per team per game. After two, any out-of-the-park home runs will count as a single, any players on base will also advance one base.
 - 5.2.4. **INFIELD FLY:** An Infield Fly is a fair fly ball that can be easily caught by an infielder when there are runners on first and second or first, second, and third and less than two outs. If the umpire deems a hit to be an infield fly, the batter will be called out, but runners can still choose to run or tag up, if the ball is caught.
 - 5.2.5. A batter who hits up the middle at the pitcher (within arm's reach of the pitcher) can be called out at the umpire's discretion if they deem the hit to be intentional and malicious. The fielding team has the option of taking the out from the umpire or the results of the play.
 - 5.2.6. Bat weights (aka bat "doughnuts") are not permitted to be used in the on-deck circle, per ASA regulations.
 - 5.3. **COUNT**
 - 5.3.1. All batters will start with a 1 and 1 count (1 ball and 1 strike).
 - 5.3.2. Three (3) total strikes is an out, four (4) total balls advances the batter to first base.
 - 5.3.3. Once the batter has two (2) total strikes, the batter gets one (1) courtesy foul. If the batter then hits another foul ball, they will be called out.
 - 5.4. **FIELDING:** The team on defense can have a maximum of ten (10) players in the field during a given inning, and a minimum of nine (9), in accordance with 3.3.1.
 - 5.5. **FAIR AND FOUL BALLS:** The umpire(s) will make the determination of whether a ball is fair or foul.

5.6. RUNNING AND SCORING:

- 5.6.1. Runners travelling from home plate may overrun first (1st) base, and may only be tagged out if actively and intentionally attempting to advance to second (2nd) base.
- 5.6.2. SAFETY BASE: The safety base must be used when the runner is travelling to first base from home plate and not continuing on to second base. The first time a member of a team does not use the safety base, the team will receive a warning. Team Captains are expected to reiterate this rule with their teams. On the second infraction by the team, which could be by a different player than the one who caused the warning, the player will be called out.
- 5.6.3. Runners must stay within the baseline. Any runner who runs outside of the baseline is out, unless the runner is merely following a natural running arc or changing course to avoid interference with a fielder making a play. Runners may be no more than four (4) feet outside the baseline when attempting to avoid a tag.
- 5.6.4. Fielders must stay out of the baseline unless actively attempting to field a batted ball. Runners hindered by a fielder not fielding a ball will be called safe at the bag to which they are running.
- 5.6.5. Runners are not permitted to lead off base or steal bases, they may only advance once the ball is hit. A runner who is off base when the ball is hit is out.
- 5.6.6. SLIDING: Sliding into any base is allowed, at the runner's discretion. However, if the umpire determines that the sliding runner was aiming for the defensive player at that base, the runner will be called out.

5.7. INJURY AND SUBSTITUTIONS:

- 5.7.1. In case of injury or illness, Captains may request a timeout for the player's removal and replacement. If the player later returns to play, they must be inserted into the same batting order position that they previously held. If the player's batting order position has already been passed (skipped per 5.7.2), they can no longer return to play.
- 5.7.2. If a player is injured or becomes ill and cannot continue, the batting order will continue in the same order, less the injured player. There will be no penalty (an out or otherwise) for skipping the injured player in the lineup.
- 5.7.3. One courtesy runner is allowed per inning per team. The courtesy runner can be any player on the line up, however if a courtesy runner is on base and subsequently comes up to bat in the batting order, the batter will be called out, and the player will remain as a courtesy runner.
- 5.7.4. Players can be subbed in and out on defense each inning as needed, without any penalty. Example: Player 1 plays third base during innings 1 and 2, then Player 2 plays third base during innings 3 and 4, then Player 1 goes back in for inning 5. Player 2 still has the ability to go back in for any subsequent innings, even though Player 1 went back in for them.

5.8. PLAYOFFS:

- 5.8.1. No players who played less than two (2) games in the regular season will be permitted to participate in the playoffs.
- 5.8.2. During playoffs, only one pickup player will be allowed per team (to reach 9 players total). During playoffs, there will be no run limit per inning (4.3.3), but all slaughter rules will still be in effect (4.3.1).
- 5.8.3. During playoffs, if the game ends in a tie, additional innings will be played using the ITB rule (International Tie-Breaker). This entails the last person out from the previous inning being placed on second base at the start of the tie-breaker inning.
- 5.8.4. During the tournament championship game, there will be no time limit and a full seven (7) innings will be played, except if a slaughter rule is employed or if the game reaches

the time period when the field lights automatically shut off.

5.9. SPORTSMANSHIP

5.9.1. While games are often competitive, ensuring participant safety and providing a comfortable atmosphere is important to the League, on and off the field. Game atmosphere should attempt to remain good-natured at all times.

- Proper sportsmanlike behavior is subjective, but a player may be warned or ejected from the game if the umpire, Stonewall Board of Directors, or Stonewall Softball League Leadership deem their behavior unacceptable.
- All players and coaches have the ability to submit complaints about any member of the league to the Stonewall Board of Directors, who will review the complaints impartially and take appropriate action based on the situation.
- Any player committing multiple infractions in the same season (including warnings, ejections, complaints filed against them, etc) can be suspended from the league, determined by both the Stonewall Board of Directors and Stonewall Softball League Leadership.

5.9.2. Teams are not allowed to discourage any member of their team from playing for ANY reason, except when the player is injured or has a legitimate medical condition that inhibits their ability to play (see 3.3.5, 5.7.1, and 5.7.2). All rostered, non-injured players present for the game must bat.

5.9.3. Public drunkenness, physical acts of violence, excessive swearing, discriminatory comments, sexual harassment, and/or any conditions creating an unsafe environment are not permitted. The umpire has discretion to penalize any violating players.

5.9.4. Alcohol is not permitted at the field.

5.9.5. Captains are responsible for maintaining proper sportsmanlike behavior for their teams.

5.9.6. **Stonewall Sports Raleigh Zero Tolerance Policy**- Stonewall Sports Raleigh has zero tolerance of any bullying or harassment of any kind and for any reason of any player, captain, referee, official, participant, sponsor, director, officer or spectator. Harassment can be verbal, physical or visual, and includes all unwelcome conduct that affects someone else. The Stonewall Sports Raleigh Board of Directors has an open door policy and welcomes you to report any conduct by any player, captain, referee, official, participant, sponsor, director, officer, or spectator that makes you feel uncomfortable. The Board of Directors takes all allegations and reports seriously and will thoroughly investigate all claims, and if warranted, will take all appropriate action.