



Takoma Park Recreation Department

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Takoma Park Adult Softball League **2024 Season Rules**

1. The League

Philosophy: The league's purpose is to provide a recreational Adult Softball League to its community, with emphasis on good sportsmanship, fun, and exercise, with everyone getting a good chance to play.

Administration: The league will operate under the jurisdiction of the Takoma Park Recreation Department. Questions and discrepancies should be brought to the League Director's attention for review. Guideline changes may be made at the League Director's discretion.

Regular Season Format: Teams will play seven (7) double headers, totaling 14 regular season games; this does not include the Championship Weekend. The winning team is responsible for calling or e-mailing the League Director with the scores from the games.

Playoff Format: Top (4) teams will play. Team seeded number one (home team) will play team seeded number four (visiting team). Team seeded number two (home team) will play team seeded number three (visiting team). The winner of each game will play each other for the championship, with the highest seeded team being the home team.

2. Coaches

The coach shall be their Team Representative, and is responsible for:

- a. Being the liaison between the League Director and their team members
- b. Attending all coaches meetings
- c. The conduct of team players and spectators
- d. Ensuring that all roster information is correct and/or updated at all times
- e. Reinforcing the Recreation Philosophy to all players
- f. Keeping team bench and surrounding area free of trash

3. Team membership

Anyone at least 16 years of age is eligible to play in this league, except any "A" League players.

4. Game Rules

Official ASA Rules will govern league play, with these exceptions:

- a. Each team must play at least three women or nonbinary players for the entire game. If a team can field only two women or nonbinary players, they will then field nine players with an automatic out in place of the missing female. Furthermore, the automatic out will be last in the line-up (#10 in batting order or lower). However, if a third women or nonbinary arrives before the first inning is over, they will take the last spot in the line-up (#10 in batting order or lower) and the automatic out is retracted. If a team cannot field at least two women or nonbinary players, that team will forfeit the game.
- b. A forfeit will be declared by the umpire if a team fails to appear ten minutes past the scheduled game time.
- c. In a doubleheader, if a team cannot field eight players for each game, that game will be a forfeit. That team then has 30 minutes to field a team for the second game before a forfeit is declared. For example, if a team forfeits the first game of a doubleheader at 9:30, they will have until 10:00 to field a full team for the second game.
- d. A designated hitter (DH) will be allowed as an eleventh batter and may bat anywhere in the lineup.
- e. A courtesy runner for any hitter with running-related disability or injury will be permitted, once the hitter has reached 1st base. The courtesy runner shall be the person who made the last out before the designated hitter's turn at bat. This rule is an option for each team, not a requirement. Courtesy runners are not allowed to replace slow or inexperienced runners who have no running-related disability or injury.
- f. Once a regular season game begins, and is postponed due to rain, it shall be declared no game by the plate umpire and rescheduled if it has not gone past 4 ½ innings. If it has gone past 4 ½ innings, the team that was ahead at the completion of the last full inning is the winner.

- g. The Ten-Run Rule will be in effect after 4 ½ innings, provided the losing team has batted at least five times.
- h. All games are seven innings, except as noted above.
- i. The Home Team shall furnish a new game ball each game. The opposing team shall provide a secondary ball. Additional balls will be provided by the home team.
- j. Bases must be provided by the Home Team and must be stationary and free of rips and tears.
- k. Protests considered only when based on a violation or interpretation of a playing rule or the use of an ineligible player. No protests involving an umpire's call will be considered.
- l. All Protests must be submitted in writing within two days of the game under protest. A twenty dollar fee is required to submit all written protests. If the protest is won, the money will be refunded.
- m. No metal spikes allowed.
- n. Notice of forfeits must be made two days before the scheduled game. If this notice is not given, a forfeit penalty will be assessed equivalent to the umpire fees. A total of five unexcused forfeits will result in expulsion from the League.
- o. All counts start at 1-1. Only one foul ball is allowed after the batter has two strikes.
- p. A substitute who bats, but does not play the field is a pinch hitter, and may not enter the game a second time. The batter who was pinch-hit for, may not reenter the game.
- q. There must be at least three women or nonbinary batters in the lineup (or two women or nonbinary batters and one invisible automatic out) at all times and no more than three male batters in a row in any part of the lineup.
- r. Except in the case of injury, a substitute cannot enter the game until the starting lineup has batted through one full rotation. Any starter who has been out of the game for one rotation may return and be inserted in any position and batting order of the players they are replacing.
- s. Outfielders (including the short fielder) must be at least 40 feet beyond the base paths before every pitch.
- t. After 75 minutes, all games will be one-pitch until the game is completed.
- u. A double-sided first base will be used for all games. A batter running through first base will touch the part of the bag in foul territory. The first baseman may only touch the white part of the base on the base path to record an out.
- v. ****The standard large ball will be used as a default for all players. Any player that is need of the smaller ball in order to have the potential to hit the ball past the infield may request to use the smaller ball during their first at bat. Any abuse of the rule will be challenged by the opposing captain and the final decision will be made by the umpire***
- w. The automatic out (in a lineup short of players) is eligible to end an inning as the 3rd out, which includes if the automatic out is preceded by a walk (but no intentional walks are permitted to get to a final automatic out).
- x. During the regular season only, a team may have a lineup of more than 11, but only by adding additional batters with at least a one-to-two ratio of women or nonbinary to men (if one additional player is added to the standard 11 person lineup they must be women or nonbinary, if two or three new players are added at least one must be women or nonbinary, if four new players are added at least two must be women or nonbinary, etc.). Such additional players will be designated hitters but may substitute into the fielding lineup freely with other persons in the batting lineup, with those other players then becoming designated hitters. But each extra designated hitter must play at least one inning in the field (and the goal should be to maximize playing time for all persons in the lineup) and any team using an extended batting lineup must always have at least three women or nonbinary as fielders.
- y. Bats will be checked against ASA Non-Approved Bat List before the first game by the umpires.
- z. NO multi wall or composite bats. The umpire **WILL** do a bat check before the game.
- aa. Teams may loan players to a team that does not have enough players, but the game will count in the record books.
- bb. Pitch height must be 6 to 12 feet with an arc. It is slow-pitch.
- cc. Playoff games will be played with no time limits.
- dd. This is an inclusive league and any racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, or xenophobic comments will result in one warning from the umpire. A second incident of such language will result in the offending player being removed from the game.

5. Inclement Weather:

It is the responsibility of the League Director to determine if the field is playable at least one hour before game time. The League Director will send an email to the captains by 8:35 a.m. every Sunday until the season is completed. Game umpires have the authority to postpone or cancel any games on account of inclement weather.