

South-Central WELS CO-ED Modified Fast Pitch Church Softball Rules and Regulations

Current Rules will be maintained on our website: www.welschurchsoftball.weebly.com

Article I. Christian Fellowship and Membership

Section 1.01 Purpose

(a) To bring people together in Christian Fellowship as we use the talents and gifts that we have been given in friendly competition. Above all else it is our intent to serve the Lord and spread the Word of God to all.

Section 1.02 Membership

- (a) Open to WELS/ELS Churches within Dodge, Jefferson, Dane, and Columbia Counties or others as approved by the league commissioner.
- (b) Churches must reach out to the league commissioner prior to April 30 each year for acceptance into the league.
- (c) The league commissioner has authority to approve or deny membership dependent on the needs and best interest of the league. Approvals or denials may be appealed and overturned by a majority vote of league managers

Section 1.03 Fellowship Beverages and Snacks

(a) Home Teams are encouraged to provide beverages and snacks for after league games. No alcoholic beverages will be allowed before or during games.

Article II. Rosters

Section 2.01 Roster Size and Makeup

(a) The Roster must have a minimum of 12 players per team

(b) The Roster must be made up of active communicant members of your church or a neighboring eligible church. Pastors will need to confirm that all players are active members in good standing. Exceptions to this rule for prospective members may be made by the commissioner on a case by case basis.

(c) Teams are to be CO-ED and rosters must include at least 3 female players. A 60-year-old male may be substituted for a female.

(d) If a player arrives late to a game or tournament, they may be placed at the end of the roster to play, or put in as a substitute on a 10-player roster.

Article III. Conduct

Section 3.01 Code of Conduct

(a) All players shall represent themselves and their teams in a manner that will not bring discredit to their church, the synod, or the softball league. Actions which are deemed as being inappropriate will be dealt with appropriately by the league.

(b) Foul Language

1) Foul language will not be tolerated and will be addressed by the umpire as follows: (A manager may bring it to the umpire at the time to be addressed – the umpire’s discretion is final) All offenses will be reported to the league commissioner following the game.

a) 1st Team Offense – Warning to the offending team

b) 2nd Team Offense – If the offending player is in the field (or on the bench when their team is in the field at the time of the offense), the batter at the plate for the next pitch has the option to walk or continue with their at bat. If the offending player is batting (or on the bench at the time their team is batting), the batter that is up will be out. The offending player must be ejected.

c) 3rd Team Offense – Will be referred to the league commissioner for possible player suspension from the league as determined by the commissioner.

2) Depending on the offense, suspensions may be given to any player involved in any of the offenses. If a team receives multiple offenses over multiple games, the league commissioner may also consider suspension of involved players.

3) Fans who violate the league Code of Conduct policy will be warned by the umpire and if behavior continues, play will be suspended and the fan will be asked to leave. Play may continue after the fan has left.

(c) Sportsmanship

1) All teams are expected to treat others with respect. Other conduct that may be deemed as inappropriate may be forwarded to the league commissioner for action up to and including suspension as determined by the commissioner.

Article IV. Game Play

Section 4.01 Date, Time, and Location of Games

(a) The regular season will begin on the first Wednesday following Memorial Day and will continue until no later than the first Wednesday in August.

(b) Games will be played at 6:30pm. Games may also be held at 8:15pm if a field is equipped with lights. Alternative times for each game may be determined upon mutual agreement by both managers.

(c) Each team will be responsible for furnishing their own home field. Teams without a home team may be able to utilize Waterloo Firemen's Park. Every attempt shall be made by team managers to locate their own home field and Waterloo Firemen's Park should be a last resort.

(d) Managers are responsible for reserving their home field for their home games. It is encouraged to reserve a diamond before the schedule comes out and cancel reservations for days not needed when the schedule is published.

Section 4.02 Game Balls

- (a) Game Balls shall be the nationally approved high school varsity 12" yellow softballs (.47 Core and .375 compression).
- (b) It shall be the responsibility of each team to provide at least one new game ball and 2 good used back up balls per home game.
- (c) Balls may be obtained by speaking with school athletic directors or at local sporting goods stores.

Section 4.03 Equipment

- (a) Bats
 - 1) All bats are to be ASA approved bats and must have an ASA or equivalent standard stamp (Example ASA stamps shown below). Old heavy bats are grandfathered.



- (b) Illegal Bats
 - 1) Players bringing and allowing use of illegal bats are disqualified from the game/tournament regardless of when the illegal bat usage was discovered. The umpire's decision is final.
 - 2) Players using an illegal bat will be called out. If a play took place as a result of a player using an illegal bat, all runners will return to the bases they were on prior to that at bat occurring. This will not be retroactive to prior plays in which the illegal bat usage was not discovered until after the first pitch of the next batter.

3) When an illegal bat is discovered to be used, the managers shall notify the league commissioner within 24 hours so that notification can be made to league managers regarding the infraction. This will be done so that future all team managers are aware prior to future games being played.

(b) Face Masks

1) All catchers and umpires are required to wear a face mask.

Section 4.04 Rules (Official modified fast-pitch rules will be followed, except the following)

(a) There must be a minimum of 7 players on the field per team.

(b) There must be at least 3 female players on the field per team (see 60-year-old exception in Section 2.01)

(c) Teams with less than 3 females will field one less person per female missing.

(d) Teams with less than 3 females must insert a vacant spot in the batting order and must take an out each time that spot in the batting order is due to bat.

(e) All players shall be in the batting order for the entire game and there is unlimited substitution for fielding.

(f) As an alternative to (e) above, teams may play a 10-player roster. Two players may take turns batting and fielding, locking into one batting slot. Players must alternate every other inning playing in the field. Managers shall notify the opposing manager that they are using the 10-player roster prior to the game.

(g) Sliding

1) Sliding is not required nor prohibited.

2) Every attempt shall be made to avoid contact if possible.

3) Blocking a base by the fielder is prohibited unless attempting to field the ball. Intentionally making contact with the runner other than tagging the

player out or making a play on the ball shall result in a "SAFE" call at the base.

4) Intentionally running into the fielder by the runner which is deemed to be unnecessary by the umpire shall result in an "OUT" call at the base.

5) The umpire has discretion to determine if the contact by either player was intentional/flagrant. The umpire shall eject the player from the game if in his opinion the act was intentional/flagrant. A manager may appeal to the umpire if they feel the act was intentional/flagrant, but the umpire has the final decision.

(h) Plays at Home Plate

1) There shall be a point of no return creating a force play to be made at home plate. The point of no return line shall be 12 feet from home plate toward the 3rd base line. Once passing this line, the runner may not retreat back to 3rd base. If there is a play at the plate and the fielder catches the ball with any part of their body placed 15 inches or less in front of home plate with a runner between the point of no return and home plate, the runner is "OUT". No tagging the runner is necessary.

(i) If a pitcher walks a MALE batter with a FEMALE batter on deck, the FEMALE may choose to also walk or may choose to bat.

(j) No batter may advance to first base on a dropped third strike.

(k) Leading Off

1) Runners may lead off from their base after the ball leaves the pitchers hand

2) If the runner leads off early, the runner is "OUT". An umpire must see the offense and upon seeing the infraction shall immediately call the runner out. The umpires decision is final.

(l) Stealing

1) Runners may steal 2nd or 3rd base at any time after the ball leaves the pitchers hand.

2) Runners may only steal home if there is a play in the field. If the catcher overthrows the pitcher when returning the ball to the pitcher, it should be considered a play in the field, unless the ball is being thrown back after a foul ball or other dead ball event.

(m) Balls and Strikes

1) There will be 4 balls and 3 strikes.

2) Bunting a foul ball on a 3rd Strike is an out. Rule (m)(3) below does not apply to bunting.

3) After reaching 2 strikes, a batter is only allowed 1 foul ball. If a second foul ball is hit after the batter reaches 2 strikes, the batter is "OUT".

(n) Quick Pitches

1) Quick pitches are not allowed. The pitcher must allow the batter to get set in the batter's box before the pitch is delivered. If an umpire determines the pitch is a quick pitch, it will be deemed a "No Pitch".

(o) Mercy Rule

1) If after 5 innings, a team is leading by 15 runs, the game shall be over.

2) If after 6 innings, a team is leading by 10 runs, the game shall be over.

3) The teams may choose to finish the game if time allows, but the score is final.

(p) Injuries

1) If a player is injured during play and the player can no longer continue to play due to the injury. They will be removed from the lineup. There will be no penalty to the team for injuries and that spot will simply be skipped in the lineup. If the injury is a female and causes the team to fall below 3 females, and the game has already begun, they must play with 1 vacant position in the field. They will not be charged with an out in the lineup when that person is scheduled to come up to bat.

(q) **Courtesy Runners**

- 1) If a player is injured during play, or if they can bat but are unable to run the bases due to a current or previous physical injury, they will be given a courtesy runner.
- 2) The courtesy runner will pinch run at the base the player had obtained at the end of the play, or at first base if courtesy running for an injured batter.
- 3) Courtesy runners shall be the last uninjured player to make an out in the lineup regardless of gender.

Article V. Forfeits

Section 5.01 The following circumstances require a team to forfeit their game

- (a) Teams who are unable to field a team of at least 7 players on the date of the original scheduled game. (Unless mutually agreeable by the managers of each team to play on at a different date/time.)
- (b) Teams who make less than 3-hour notice of not being able to field a team will be penalized with 2 losses instead of one. Efforts shall be made to make notification at least 48 hours in advance if possible.
- (c) Once a forfeit is declared, games can not be made up at a later date for purpose of the team record. If the teams wish to make up the game for fun, the game will not count toward the team record.

Article VI Weather Cancellations

Section 6.01 Guidelines for Weather Cancellations

- (a) Managers will make determination on if to cancel games due to weather. A final decision shall be made by 5:00 pm unless other arrangements have been made by the managers.
- (b) Either manager can make a decision to cancel, however this responsibility should usually be made by the home team manager so that field conditions can be evaluated.
- (c) Weather related cancellations are not considered a forfeit.
- (d) Weather related cancellations can be made up if mutually agreed upon by both managers. Weather related make up games will count for the purpose of team record.

Article VII. Tournament

Section 7.01 Date and Time of Tournament

- (a) The tournament will take place on Saturday of the first full weekend in August The rain date will be the following Sunday.
- (b) The tournament will start at 9am and last until a Championship Team has been determined

Section 7.02 Tournament Eligibility

- (a) Players must play in at least 2 regular season games to be eligible to play in the tournament. (Exceptions must be approved by the league managers before the tournament starts)
- (b) A player may only play on one team in the tournament.

Section 7.03 Tournament Rules

- (a) Tournament games will have a 1 hour time limit with the exception of the Championships Game(s) and the 3rd place games if no games are played after them on the same diamond.

(b) A new inning shall start if the 3rd out of an inning occurs prior to the 60 minute game clock expiring. This shall be the discretion of the umpire and their decision shall be final unless both managers mutually agree to continue or discontinue the game.

(c) Warm up pitches will be allowed as follows:

- 1) No more than 20 pitches to warm up in the pitchers first inning of work.
- 2) No more than 3 pitches to warm up between innings.
- 3) Warmup pitches will be allowed in the event of an injury to determine if a pitcher can continue.

Section 7.03 Tournament Trophy

(a) A traveling tournament trophy will be given to the winning team after each years tournament. The cost of the trophy engraving will be paid for by the league.

(b) In the event that a trophy is damaged, the team responsible for the damage shall be responsible for repair cost. An appeal of repair costs may be brought to the commissioner for circumstances out of the control of that team.

Article VIII. League Fees

Section 8.01 The following are fees required to be paid to the league per team. All fees must be paid by May 15 payable to the league commissioner as designated on the league website.

(a) \$25 – If using Waterloo as a home field

(b) \$75 – League Fee

(c) It will be the responsibility of each team to pay necessary fees required for use of their own field.

(d) \$25 - late fee for rosters received after the registration deadline (April 30) without first seeking approval from the commissioner to submit the roster late.

(e) \$25 - fee for all checks returned NSF

Section 8.02 League Finances

(a) The commissioner or designee, beginning in 2019, shall keep a book of the financial transactions of the league and make a report to the league managers at pre-season meetings starting in March 2020.

Article IX. Umpires

Section 9.01 Regular Season League Games

(a) Home teams should work to find a neutral umpire for each home game.

(b) If a team is unable to locate a suitable umpire, the managers may utilize players to umpire their games. Typically, the batting team will umpire while they are batting.

Section 9.02 Tournament Games

(a) All teams participating in the tournament will be responsible for providing an umpire for other tournament games.

(b) The league will attempt to furnish paid umpires for the Competitive Bracket Semi-Final and Championship Games.

Article X. League Meetings

Section 10.01 Pre-Season Meeting

(a) A pre-season meeting will be held on the last Saturday in March at 9:00am at St John's School in Waterloo, or other date and location as set by the

commissioner (unless this weekend is Easter weekend in which case the meeting will be held the Saturday before).

(b) This meeting will be held to evaluate rules, regulations, and format of the league.

(c) Each team manager or a representative of the team shall attend this meeting.

Section 10.02 Pre-Tournament Meeting

(a) A meeting will be held at 8am on the date of the tournament to discuss tournament issues.

(b) Each team manager or a representative of the team shall attend this meeting.