



# Bloomsburg University Intramural Sports Program

## **IM Sports – SOFTBALL RULES**

*NIRSA rules with these IM modifications & the IM General Rules will govern play.*

### **1. Players, Substitutes, and Roster Size**

- A. Eligibility: MUST SHOW BU ID for every competition. Currently enrolled BU undergraduate students, graduate students, and BU Faculty/Staff personnel are eligible for intramural competition.
  - i. A player is ineligible for any further activity as of the date he or she withdraws from school.
  - ii. Players listed on the current year's varsity sport roster are ineligible to participate in the same/comparable intramural sport.
- B. There will be four weeks of regular season play and one week of playoffs.
- C. Roster
  - i. **Each team shall have a minimum of 7 players (3 need to be female) maximum 10 in the line up.**
  - ii. The number of male players may be equal to, or less than, but not greater than one more the number of female players
  - iii. New players may be added to a roster at any time during the "Regular Season". **Players must be added by 12 noon on game day AND be on the printed roster.** If a player's name is NOT on the roster they can NOT play.
  - iv. Players may only play for ONE TEAM within a sport. Playing in ONE game "declares player's team" for the remainder of that league.
    - 1. Players cannot switch teams after they have played in a game.
    - 2. Violation will result in suspension of the player and team captain along with forfeiture of the game/s in question.
  - i. Club Baseball and Softball Players: Team club members are limited in IM softball to two (2), on the field at a time with a total of three (3) on the roster. *See Intramural General Rules for Club Player description.*
  - ii. All current Varsity Baseball and Softball players are ineligible to participate. *See Intramural General Rules*
  - iii. Former Varsity Baseball and Softball Members will be limited to two (2) players per roster. *See Intramural General Rules*

### **2. Equipment and Uniform**

- A. **Bats:** Only bats supplied by the Intramural Department are allowed, due to the difficulty in monitoring "illegal bats".
- B. **Shoes:** Metal or Replaceable cleats/spikes are ILLEGAL. Molded rubber shoes are legal.
  - i. Any player seen wearing metal spikes after the first pitch of the game will be ejected.
  - ii. Players must wear closed-toed shoes at all times, i.e. sneakers or boots
- C. A game ball and a catcher's mask will be provided as well. Catchers are encouraged to wear the protective masks, but not require, which are provided for their protection.
- D. **Throwing of equipment will result in immediate removal from game. Please do not throw, slam, ect. equipment.**

### **3. Time Regulations and the Length of Game**

- A. Games will be 7 innings or 50 minutes, which ever happens first.
- B. A new inning will not start after the 50 minute mark if 7 innings has not been completed, it will be at the umpire's discretion to call the game or play.
- C. Once an inning starts, play must continue until the end of that inning.
- D. The umpire may call the game before the beginning of a new inning, due to time constraints.
- E. **Tie**
  - i. If after 7 innings and time permits, the game will go to extra innings.
  - ii. Teams will start with a runner (the person who made the last out) on 2nd base.
  - iii. Teams will start with 1 out.
  - iv. Teams will keep playing until the time limit expires or there is a winner.
- F. **Mercy Rule:** When a team is ahead by 10 or more runs after 5 complete innings of play (4 ½ if the home team is winning) the game will be called and that team will be declared the winner.

- G. **Called Games:** In the event of inclement weather or power failure of more than 15 minutes, the following will constitute a complete game:
- Four innings have been completed (3 1/2 if the home team is leading).
  - The game has reached at least one-half hour in elapsed time.
  - If the game is called due to weather before the time limit (30 minutes) or inning limit (4 innings) the game will be cancelled and not rescheduled.
  - If play stops due to inclement weather, the final decision will be made by the Sport Supervisor.

#### 4. Forfeits and Starting Games

- A. **GAME TIME is FORFEIT TIME!!!** If a team does not have the minimum number of players (7 which must include at least 3 females) at the scheduled game time, the game will be called and either a default or forfeit will be recorded.
- Forfeits:** Teams that have FEWER THAN HALF THE MINIMUM PLAYER REQUIREMENT (less than 4 players) present on the field/court at game time will lose the game by forfeit. A deposit of up to \$20.00 will be assessed to the team captain prior to participation.
    - 1<sup>st</sup> Violation=** Teams/individuals will lose forfeit deposit.
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Violation=** Teams that forfeit for the second time, without notification to the Intramural Sports Office, maybe dropped from the tournament.
  - Defaults:** Teams that have three (4) players, but not enough players to compete at game time will lose the game by default. Teams may also inform the Intramurals Office (389-5288) by 4:00 pm (after 4:00pm will be a forfeit) on game day to receive a loss by default.
    - 1<sup>st</sup> Violation=** Grace, teams/individuals are not penalized.
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Violation=** 1 Forfeit. Team/individual will lose their Forfeit Fee and team captain must speak with the Intramural Director to discuss further league play.
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> Violation=** 2 Forfeits. Team/individual will be dropped from the tournament.
  - Grace Period:** A team will forfeit a game when it is not ready by game time. The team ready to play will have the choice to grant their opponent a Grace Period, at which they will have 10 minutes to field the minimum number of players to play. **Game clock will start.** The following penalties will be enforced during the 10 minute grace period. 1 run will be awarded to the team ready to play for every 2 minutes that passes.
    - Game time:** Team ready for play will be awarded a 1 run.
    - 2 minutes:** Team ready for play will be awarded another 1 run for a total of 2 runs.
    - 6 minutes:** Team ready for play will be awarded 2 more runs for a total of 4 runs.
    - 10 minutes:** Team ready for play will be awarded 6 pts. And the game will be declared a forfeit with a final score of 6-0.
    - Teams must be ready to play at their scheduled game time. Once team minimum is met, late arrivals can still play once they check in.

#### 5. Playing Rules and Scoring

- A. The referee has authority to rule promptly, in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. The referee's decisions are final in all matters pertaining to the game.
- B. **PLAYERS:** The minimum number of players to play is 7 and the maximum is 10.
- The number of male players may be equal to, or less than, but not greater than one more the number of female players. Teams must maintain these numbers for the entire game.
  - If playing with one more guy than girl (5 guys and 4 girls or 4 guys and 3 girls) the **catcher** MUST be a guy.
    - This catcher will only be permitted to bat on an alternating basis with one of his teammates.
    - The alternating hitter must be designated at the start of the game.
    - Teams playing with less than 10 players will start each inning with 1 out.**
  - SUBSTITUTION:**
    - Limited free substitution is permitted in order to encourage maximum participation.
    - Once a substitute has entered the line-up, he/she must play for 6 consecutive outs (a full inning).
    - Once a player has been replaced in the batting order, he/she may bat again only if he/she returns to the position in the order which he/she vacated.
    - The starter and the substitute cannot be in the lineup at the same time.
    - In the event of an injury, disqualification, or ejection, a substitute may enter the game prior to the 6-out period. The sub, or the team captain, should inform the umpire prior to putting their name into the appropriate slot on the game sheet.

- C. DEFENSIVE POSITIONING: Teams must have two (2) female players and two (2) male players in both the outfield and the infield, unless team is playing with seven (7) than only one (1) male and female are required in both the outfield and the infield.
  - i. A team playing with nine (9) players that have 3 in the outfield or infield, must have at least one (1) female and one (1) male among the 3.
  - ii. The pitcher combination must be made up of a male and a female.
- D. BATTING:
  - i. Batter must alternate male-female or female-male.
  - ii. **Each batter begins their at-bat with a 1-1 count.**
  - iii. The batter must have a portion of his/her foot touching the ground within the batter's box area. The umpire will determine the batter's box, based on IM guidelines.
  - iv. The batter shall not step on or across the plate. If this occurs, the batter is out and the ball is dead.
  - v. Bunting or chopping down on the ball will result in an automatic out.
  - vi. The batting order must be followed. Substitutes will bat in the position of the player they replaced.
  - vii. A batter is called out on a foul ball that is hit with a two-strike count. If such a foul ball is NOT CAUGHT, base runners MAY NOT advance; ball is dead. If such a foul ball is CAUGHT, base runners MAY advance at their own risk.
- E. PITCHING:
  - i. A ball must be delivered underhand at a moderate speed from below the hip, and with a perceptible arc that reaches a height of at least 6 feet from the ground but not exceeding 12 feet.
    - 1. Pitcher must start with contact on the pitching rubber.
    - 2. The speed of the pitch is left entirely to the judgment of the umpire. The ball may be released with the palm either on the top or on the bottom of the ball. **(Violations of these rules is an Illegal Pitch)**
  - ii. Illegal Pitch
    - 1. If the batter swings at or contacts the pitch, the illegal pitch is nullified and all action as a result of the batter's swing stands.
    - 2. If the batter does not swing, a ball is added to the batter's count
  - iii. Strike Zone:
    - 1. For each legally pitched ball touching any part of home plate or the mat will be declared a strike.
- F. BASE ON BALLS (WALKING):
  - i. Any time a batter is walked, the next two consecutive batters are not eligible to walk.
  - ii. **Any time a batter is walked, the next batter has option to accept an automatic walk.**
  - iii. Example 1: Batter 1 walked, Batter 2 accepts automatic walk, Batter 3 can NOT be walked.
  - iv. Example2: Batter 1 walked, Batter 2 declines automatic walk and bats (can not be walked), Batter 3 can not be walked.
- G. BASE RUNNING:
  - i. Base runner(s) may not leave their base until the pitch reaches home plate. There is no stealing.
  - ii. When the ball is in play and is overthrown out of play, one base shall be awarded to each base runner. (Bases are awarded according to the position of runners at the time the ball is thrown.
  - iii. Pinch runners are allowed only if the batter is injured.
- H. SLIDING: THIS IS A NONCONTACT SPORT. If there is a play at home plate where safety is of concern, players must slide. **If a player does not slide when necessary, the runner is out.**
  - i. It is at the umpire's discretion when to use the "slide rule."
  - ii. Players must slide feet first. **No headfirst slides.** If a player slides headfirst, the runner is out.
  - iii. Base Sliding must be performed with discretion. If undue contact occurs, the base runner maybe ejected. The advancing base runner may not collide with the person covering the base. Upright collisions may result in an automatic out, and possible ejection
- I. FIELD OF PLAY:
  - i. Any ball that is hit and enters another Intramural Field, in which a game is being played, (i.e. soccer, flag football) it will be ruled a ground rule double. All base runners will advance two (2) bases.
- J. RUN LIMIT:
  - i. There is a 5 run limit per inning. The 5th inning and after, a team may score as many runs as they need to avoid getting beat by the 10 Run Rule.
  - ii. If the score difference is 5 runs or less, during a team's at bat, during the 5th inning or later, they must still follow the 5 run limit per inning.
  - iii. The team leading by 5 or more runs, during the 5<sup>th</sup> inning or later, must still follow the 5 run limit per inning.

**6. Participant Conduct and Fair Play – “SPORTSMANSHIP”**

- A. All players, captains, and spectators will be held to a reasonable standard of conduct and fair play. Violators of this standard will be subject to sport-specific penalties, and/or possible removal from the building and future Intramural sports.
- B. **SPORTSMANSHIP RATING:** Behavior before, during, and after an intramural contest is included in each rating.
  - i. **Teams must maintain a 3.0 average in order to qualify for playoff play. Teams must also maintain a 3.0 average during playoffs in order to advance.**
- C. **EJECTIONS:** All ejections will result in at least a one game suspension and scheduled meeting with the Director of Intramurals and that sports coordinator.
  - i. The player that is ejected will be given 2 minutes to leave the playing area and facility. If the player does not leave within 2 minutes their team will be penalized 2 runs. If the player has still not left the playing area and facility the game will be called a loss to the team the player was a member of.
- D. See Intramural General Rules for Rating Scale and Consequences.

**7. Playoffs**

- A. Playoff Eligibility: Team must be in good standing with no unsportsmanlike conduct issues.
  - i. Players must be on official team roster
  - ii. Players must have played in at least 2 regular season games.
- B. The number of teams who qualify, plus the number, length, and playing rules for playoff games may be altered as time, weather, facility, and equipment conditions require. A variety of options will be considered before altering the preferred playoff format.
- C. Teams must be able to play any day during playoffs. Championship games maybe be scheduled on Fridays or Sundays. Make sure you have enough players on your roster so you do not have to forfeit during playoffs.
- D. The IM Office does not personally notify teams regarding playoff schedules.
- E. Teams need to familiarize themselves with the Team Sportsmanship Rating System located in the Intramural General Rules Handbook as this will affect their eligibility for playoffs at the end of league play.

**8. Officials and Manager Duties**

- A. The Intramural scorekeeper at each court will be responsible for scoring the game and checking ID's and rosters.
- B. Teams should verify the score after the game. Captains must sign the score sheet to verify the game winner.
- C. Coordinators/Officials have the power to enforce all Intramural rules as they apply to players, coaches and spectators.

**9. Safety and Prevention**

- A. A player who has any visible amount of blood on their uniform shall be considered an injured player and must leave the game immediately for appropriate treatment and/or changing of clothes.
  - i. All blood soiled clothing must be removed before the player can reenter the game.
- B. Players wearing glasses should have shatter proof lenses and straps.
- C. No braces or hard casts are allowed on the wrist or arms. Leg/knee braces with exposed hard materials will only be allowed if they are sufficiently covered with soft padding (i.e. an ace bandage).