

## **University of Montevallo INTRAMURAL SOFTBALL RULEBOOK**

### General Guidelines:

- Teams must be ready to play with eleven players at the time scheduled.
- A team is allowed to field a minimum of seven players to begin a game. If any players wish to be added to the line-up after arriving late, they must be added to the bottom of the line-up.
- Only players listed on team roster will be eligible to play with that team. The participation of an ineligible player will result in his/her team losing by default.
- Each captain will meet at midfield five minutes before a game to compete in a best-of-three, paper/rock/scissors match.
- The winner chooses to be the home team or the away team, with the home team batting in the bottom half of the inning.
- A team's line-up may have up to 11 players. Ten players will play in the field with the eleventh player in the line-up serving as the extra hitter (EH). The use of an EH must be determined prior to the start of the game and may not be added once a game has started. The extra hitter may take a position in the field, but must remain in the same spot in the batting order.
- Any player that gets on base is allowed to be pinch-run for, providing the pinch-runner's at-bat is a minimum of three at-bats away.

### Clock Management:

- All games are subject to a fifty-minute, or seven inning timing rule.
- A game will be allowed to continue an inning if it has started before the fifty-minute mark.
- If a game is tied after the seventh inning or the completion of the fifty-minute inning, it will end in a tie (aside from the postseason).
- In the postseason, all games will be allowed to play until a tie is broken.

### Game Play:

- Any balls hit over the fence in fair territory are home runs.
- When mesh outfield fences are in use, balls that bounce over or roll under these fences in fair territory shall result in a ground-rule double for the batter. Balls hit over the mesh fences shall be considered home runs.
- Over-the-fence home run limits will be in effect. For men's, each team may hit up to four home runs per game. There is no limit on homeruns in women's league play.
- Any fly ball touched by a defensive player which then goes over the fence in fair territory shall be declared a four-base award and shall not count towards a team's home run total. Inside-the-park home runs do not count towards a team's home run total.
- Once the limit is reached, any batter who hits an over-the-fence home run shall be called out. The ball is considered dead and no runners may advance on the play.
- **Each batter will begin each at-bat with a count of 1 ball and 1 strike.**
- If the third strike is fouled off, the batter is out. If the foul is caught, the ball remains alive, and runners may try to advance.

- There is no bunting. The batter must take a full swing at the ball. A batter who bunts or chops the ball (fair or foul) is out.
- If a player unintentionally throws his/her bat, the team will be given a warning. Each subsequent offense will result in the batter being called out and all runners returning to the base they occupied at the beginning of the at-bat. Any player who intentionally throws his/her bat will be called out and ejected from the game.
- On tag plays, the fielder must be in possession of the ball before attempting to block a base or home plate. Blocking a base without the ball at any base or home plate is considered obstruction. It is also obstruction when a fielder without the ball fakes a tag. For a fake tag, bases are awarded as a normal obstruction AND the fielder will be ejected from the game.
- No stealing is allowed. Base runners may leave the base when the pitch is hit. If a runner is off base before the pitch reaches the plate, the runner is called out and a "no pitch" is declared.

#### Mercy Rule:

- If one team gains an advantage of fifteen runs after three innings or ten runs after five innings, the mercy rule will be invoked and the game will be called.

#### Pitching:

- A legal delivery shall be a ball that is delivered underhand and a slow to moderate speed. The ball must reach a height of at least 6 feet and no more than 12 feet at the top of its arc.
- Any pitch that fails to reach an arc of six feet, exceeds the 12 foot limit, or is thrown with excessive speed in the opinion of the home plate umpire, will be declared an illegal pitch. This will count as a "ball" unless the batter chooses to swing, in which case the ball is live. Once an illegal pitch is swung at, all action following the swing will be legal (a strike, out, hit, etc.) and the "illegal pitch" will be disregarded.
- Definition of a strike is "a legally delivered ball passing completely over home plate before touching the ground. The ball must not be lower than the batter's knees nor higher than the batter's back shoulder while passing over any portion of home plate".

#### Overthrows:

- Overthrows that land out of play will result in the awarding of one base.

#### Appeal Plays:

- An appeal play is one in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a member of the defensive team. Appeals must be made prior to the next legal or illegal pitch or before the defensive team has left the field.
- Once the ball has been returned to the infield and time has been called, any infielder (including the pitcher or catcher), with or without possession of the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base, a runner leaving a base too soon, or the batter batting out of order. The plate umpire should acknowledge the appeal, and the administering umpire should then make a decision on the play. Base runners cannot leave their base during this period, as the ball remains dead until the next pitch.

Postseason Seeding:

- Once the regular season finished, postseason seedings will be made based on those results.
- The top six teams will be selected for postseason play.
- The top two teams will be awarded a first-round bye.
- The third seed will play the sixth seed and then fourth seed will play the fifth seed.
- In the second round (semi-finals), the first seed will play the lowest remaining seed while the second seed will play the highest remaining seed.
- In the event of a tie for playoff positioning, seeding will be set by the following criteria in this order:
  - i. Head to Head Match Up (if applicable)
  - ii. Sportsmanship Rating
  - iii. Winning Percentage
  - iv. Point Differential
  - v. Coin Flip