

Cary Park District Men's Recreational Softball League Rules

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Games are played at Lions Park with game times at 6:30pm, 7:30pm, and 8:30pm. The number of teams registered in the league determines league format and a single-elimination tournament will follow the end of the regular season.

The Cary Park District has adopted the following set of rules for the Men's Softball League. Unless otherwise stated, all league play will be governed by the rules and regulations set forth by the National Softball Association (NSA).

Warning of Risk: Recreational activities/programs are intended to challenge and engage the physical, mental, and emotional resources of each participant. Despite careful and proper preparation, instruction, medical advice, conditioning, and equipment, there is still a risk of serious injury when participating in any recreational activity/program. Understandably, not all hazards and dangers can be foreseen. Depending on the particular activity, participants must understand that certain risks, dangers, and injuries due to inclement weather, slipping, falling, poor skill level or conditioning, carelessness, horseplay, unsportsmanlike conduct, premise defects, inadequate or defective equipment, inadequate supervision, instruction, or officiating, and all other circumstances inherent to indoor and outdoor recreational activities/programs exist. In this regard, it must be recognized that it is impossible for the Cary Park District to guarantee absolute safety. Players compete by their choice and must sign an injury waiver (team roster) before competing in any league. It is recommended that individual players have personal injury coverage.

League Responsibilities:

- The Park District will provide fields, field equipment (game balls, strike mats, etc.), a league administrator, a field supervisor, league rules, and umpires.
- The League Administrator will be responsible for enforcing all rules, supervising league play, tournaments, scheduling umpires, maintaining league standings, maintaining field equipment, scheduling rainouts, and communicating information to Team Managers.
- The League Administrator will distribute league and tournament schedules to the Team Managers via email in a timely manner.
- The Field Supervisor will be responsible for setting up the fields, enforcing the rules, supervising league play and tournaments, and serving as a liaison between Team Managers and the League Administrator. The Field Supervisor will be on site for all scheduled games.
- Umpires are responsible for maintaining orderly progress of each game as defined in the NSA Official Guide and the Cary Park District Softball League Rules.

Team Manager's Responsibilities:

- Each team shall designate a Team Manager who will be the sole liaison between the team and the League Administrator.
- It is the Team Manager's responsibility to make sure all team members are aware of and abide by all rules of the league, as well as park rules, as they are responsible for their players and spectators' actions.
- If a player is ejected from a game for any reason, the Team Manager must provide the player's name to the Field Supervisor.
- The Team Manager is responsible for payment of team fees (team registration fee before the first scheduled game, any fines/fees during the season, and nonresident fees before the last game of the season).
- The Team Manager is responsible for submitting the Team Roster, signed by all team members with their address/phone number, by the team's first scheduled game.
- The Team Manager (or designated manager for the game) is the only player allowed to confer with and question a call made by the umpire.
- During game play, both teams must keep an accurate score for both teams. Teams should report their runs to the umpire after each inning.

Player Rosters & Eligibility:

- All players must be at least 18 years of age.
- All players names must appear on the Team Roster and all rosters must have the signatures of each player. If a player's eligibility is contested and the name is not on the roster, he is considered to be an ineligible player.
 - All games played with ineligible players will be forfeited and a \$50.00 fine will be assessed for each game.
 - Roster checks may be requested and must be done prior to the end of the game. All players must have a picture ID at all games.
- Rosters will be limited to 20 players and must be completed and submitted to the Field Supervisor or League Administrator by the team's first scheduled game. Rosters will be frozen at that time.
- Players may only play on one team within the league.

Weather Information:

- The Cary Park District has the final decision on cancelling games. Decisions will be made by 4:30pm on game days. Any decision after that time will be determined by the Field Supervisor and umpires.
- The League Administrator will notify Team Managers via text and/or email if games will be cancelled by 4:30pm on game days.
- It is the Team Managers' responsibility to notify their teams of cancellations.

- Every effort will be made to reschedule cancelled games in order to finish the season in a timely manner.
- The Cary Park District uses the weather update system, Rainout Line, which can be found at www.carypark.com. Teams can sign up to receive text/email alerts or can download the app for game day updates.

Player Equipment & the Field:

- METAL CLEATS ARE NOT ALLOWED. If metal cleats are reported by an opposing Team Manager to the umpire, the player will be ejected from the game and fined \$25.00.
- All players must always wear a team shirt during the game (on the field and in the dugout).
- Pitchers may wear protective equipment, including helmet, mask, shin guards
- All game bats must be from NSA's "2026 Approved Bat Company Listing". Senior Bats and any other bat not on the approved bat list are considered to be illegal.
- Banned Equipment: Contact the league administrator to check on banned equipment or visit www.playnsa.com to find approved equipment page on the web site. If you do not see a certain piece of equipment listed, it is not approved by NSA.
- A strike mat will be used and placed directly up to/against the plate.
- Base distances are set at 70 feet and the pitcher's mound is set at 53 feet.

Game Play:

- Games will have a one-hour time limit. A new inning will not start after the game is one hour old, unless the game is tied. A 2/2 count will begin after 50 minutes of play at the top of the next inning. If there is a tie, extra innings will be played until there is a winner.
- The mercy/slaughter rule is as follows:
 - 20 runs at the end of the 4th inning
 - 15 runs at the end of the 5th inning
 - 10 runs at the end of the 6th inning
- A game called by the umpire due to rain, lightning, or unsafe conditions shall be regulation if 5 or more complete innings (4½ if the home team is ahead) have been played.
- Forfeits: Any team that is a no-show will be considered a forfeit. If at any time a team does not have at least eight players, the game will be forfeited. Any game in which ineligible players take part will be an automatic forfeit. Game time is forfeit time. When a game is forfeited, the official score will be 7-0 and the forfeiting team will receive the loss. In the event that neither team can field eight players, a double forfeit will occur. A double forfeit will be scored 0-0 and both teams will receive a loss. A \$50.00 forfeit fee will be added to the Team Managers park district account and will need to be paid before their next scheduled game. Any teams forfeiting three games in one season will be removed from the league for the remainder of the season.
- Only rostered players are allowed in the dugout or on the playing field.

- **Pregame Warm-up:** There will be no batting practice on the infield. Teams can take batting practice in the outfield. At no time shall any team warm-up near the playground, pavilion, or concessions. Five warm-up pitches are allowed the 1st inning; two warm-up pitches are allowed each inning thereafter. Infield and outfield ball warm-ups are allowed in the 1st inning only.
- **Batting/Substitutions:** Teams will be allowed to bat up to fifteen (15) players in a line up. If a player is injured or ejected, etc... and there is no replacement, each subsequent time that player's name comes up in the order an out will be assessed. Injured players may be replaced according to NSA rules. Players are allowed to alternate between fielding positions and the extra player position as long as the batting order does not change. If a team starts with 8, 9 or 10 players they may add 3, 2, or 1 additional players at the end of the line-up during the game, provided the leadoff man has not batted twice. At the point where you reach the last man in the your batting order, if the additional player(s) you want to add have not shown, you have two options: (1) Add the player to the line-up and take an out in their batting order until they show or (2) Play with the amount of players you currently have in your line-up and use the other player(s) only as substitutions. Substitutions involving players beyond the original twelve (12) will follow the NSA substitution rule and will be allowed into the game only once.
- **Courtesy Runner:** Anyone needing a courtesy runner should be announced at the pre-game conference. This player will require a courtesy runner for all at-bats. The player needing a courtesy runner can only bat and go not farther than first base (since they requested a courtesy runner). A player needing a courtesy runner can only walk, hit a single, hit a homer, or make an out. The subsequent courtesy runner has no restrictions. A player injured during the game may request a courtesy runner. Any team that is blatantly abusing the courtesy runner option (umpire's discretion) will no longer be able to use it and it may result in the cancellation of the courtesy runner option permanently from all Cary Park District Softball Programs.
- **Pitching/Batting/Strikes:** Teams will be allowed to bat up to twelve (12) players in a line up (see more in batting/substitutions 3.04). All at bats begin with a 1 & 1 count. A 2 & 2 count will begin at the top of an inning starting after 50 minutes of play. If the third strike is a fouled ball, the batter is out; the ball may be played as a live ball and any action following shall be played as normal play after the catch. A minimum 6' and maximum 12' pitch arc from the ground will be used.
- **Home Runs:** Each team will be allowed only five (5) home runs (over the fence) per game. Each untouched ball over the fence exceeding the team's home run limit will be scored as an out. Any ball touched by a defensive player in fair territory, which then goes over the fence in fair territory shall not be included in the total of over the fence home runs. Balls hit over the fence will need to be retrieved by the hitting team.
- **Ground Rule Double:** If a batted ball bounces over the fence, a ground rule double will be ruled.

- Double First Base: The orange portion of the base in effect exists only on the initial play of the batter/runner.
 - Three factors for play using double first base:
 - 1. If there is no play, the batter/runner may touch either the white or orange base as the batter/runner runs through or rounds first base.
 - 2. On a play where the throw is coming from fair or foul territory down the third base line, the first baseman must use the white portion of the base. No Exceptions. This includes any situation where there is an errant throw. The batter/runner must in all cases use the orange portion of the base.
 - 3. On a throw coming from foul territory down the first base line or behind home plate, the first baseman must use the white portion of the base. No Exceptions. This includes any situation where there is an errant throw. The batter/runner must in all cases use the orange portion of the base.
 - If either the defensive player or the batter/runner touches the wrong portion of the base, it will be treated as not touching the base at all.
 - If there is a collision, the player touching the wrong base is responsible for that collision and the umpire will enforce either the interference or obstruction rule.
 - If there is no play on the batter/runner, and the batter/runner misses the base entirely, not touching either white or the orange, he must return to the white base.
- Scorekeeping: Scoring clipboards will be kept at each field. Game scores will be written on the scorecards, which will require the signature of the winning team manager and the umpire following the game. This is the official score of the game and will be used for standings.
- Standings: Standings will be kept by the League Administrator. Standings will be determined by win-loss records. Ties will be broken in the following order: (1) head-to-head record; (2) point differential between teams involved; (3) total season point differential (all teams).
- Protests: Protests must be turned into the league administrator in writing along with \$25.00 within 24 hours of the incident. Judgment calls on the part of the umpire cannot be protested.

Conduct

- All players will abide by the following code of conduct and those stated in the NSA Softball Rule Book. Only the Team Manager (or designated manager for the game) will be allowed to discuss a play or rules with the umpire.
- A Team Manager is held responsible for the conduct of his/her players at all times and for playing eligible players. A manager must be sure that all players sign the team roster and provide the correct addresses and telephone numbers.
- Alcohol/Tobacco: Smoking by any players, managers or umpires while on the field, in the dugout, or coaching a base is strictly prohibited. A warning will be given for the first

offense. Any infraction afterward will result in a \$25.00 fine. The Cary Park District Policy states that no alcoholic beverages are allowed at any park site without written permission by the Cary Park District. Offenders risk penalty of law and forfeiture of their next game.

- Verbal abuse or any type of unsportsmanlike conduct perceived by the umpire as being excessive will result, in order: (1) expulsion from the game and a \$25.00 fine paid to the Cary Park District before the team's next scheduled game; (2) expulsion from the playing area; (3) forfeiture of the game.
 - NOTE: Threatening verbal abuse and/or gestures will result in expulsion from the league.
- Any physical contact (abusive in the umpire's eyes) with the umpire, opposing team, spectators, or Park District staff will result in immediate and permanent expulsion from the league. If both teams are involved in any type of physical contact or fighting, the game will result in a double forfeit and a \$50.00 fine to each team. The \$50.00 fine must be paid to the Cary Park District before both teams' next scheduled games. Physical contact and/or fighting situations could result in a teams permanent expulsion from the league.
- A player who intentionally throws a bat before, during, or after a game on the ground, at the fence, over the fence or into the dugout, will be ejected from the game and fined \$25.00, which must be paid before the player is allowed to participate in the next team's scheduled game.
- Music cannot be played in the dugout and/or during a game.
- The league administrator reserves the right to interpret and/or change any of the rules at his/her discretion. In all cases, the league administrator has the final say regarding all rules and league structure. However, teams being affected by any rule change will be notified as soon as possible.

Awards

- League Champion - \$150 and Plaque
- League Runner Up - Plaque
- Tournament Champion - \$100 and Plaque
- Tournament Runner-Up - Plaque