

**2024**

Windsor Essex County Senior Sports Organization  
Slo-Pitch League  
Administrative Rules

[as of April 20, 2024]

Administrative Rules

1. These rules define the methods used for the administration of the league. They are separate from the playing rules, or the rules enforced by the umpires during the playing of the games.
2. The rules are established and enforced by the WECSSO Executive.

Code of Conduct

1. This league is a recreational league for players 55 years of age and older. To emphasize the 'recreational aspect' and lessen the overall competitiveness, the league has (where appropriate):
  - eliminated the use of paid "carded" umpires
  - allowed the overrunning of bases
  - allowed the use of courtesy runners
  - allowed the "lending" of players to balance the number of participants
  - mandated a batting order that includes all of the players present
  - selected new teams each year using a 'draft' system
  - instituted a playoff format in which all teams make the playoffs
2. In this spirit of sportsmanship and recreation, it is expected that all participants shall:
  - recognize their good fortune to be physically able to participate in the league
  - respect the rights of their team mates and their opponents to enjoy the game of slo-pitch in a friendly and non-confrontational setting
  - be present at all scheduled games wearing the uniform provided
  - notify the team manager when a game will be missed
  - recognize the inexperience of the 'volunteer' umpires and refrain from arguing any calls
  - cooperate with their managers and coaches
  - make every effort to avoid injury, either to another player or to themselves
  - take their turn as an umpire (if necessary) or a base coach (share the load)
  - use appropriate language both on and off the diamonds

3. To ensure that all games are played in his spirit of sportsmanship and recreation, managers are encouraged to:
  - equalize player participation as much as possible, taking into account the abilities and the wishes of the players
  - lend and borrow players from game to game to equate the number of participants on each team

#### The Rules Committee

1. The league will use, for the most part, the Softball Canada rule book. Any variations are contained in this document and are governed by the Rules Committee, a subcommittee of the Executive Board of Directors.
2. The Rules Committee (here-in-after called the Committee) will meet on an annual basis during the off-season to consider all suggested changes in the playing rules, It will then submit proposed new rules, along with modified existing rules intended for the betterment of league play to the Executive Board of Directors.
3. Once the Official Rules have been approved by the Executive Board for the upcoming season, the Committee may meet during the season as necessary to consider further rule questions or rule proposals. Any additional changes must be approved by the Executive Board.
4. At all times, the health and welfare of the players should be the prime consideration in adopting rules of play.

#### Rosters

1. Rosters will be established by a draft conducted by the division conveners and the managers in that division. Rosters should not exceed 15 players. Extra players will be placed on a waiting list.
2. An individual shall be eligible to play during the calendar year in which he celebrates his 55<sup>th</sup> birthday.
3. Any new player joining the league after the draft will be assigned to a team by the convener of that division.
4. At any time, for the betterment of the league, roster changes can be made by the convener (with the input of all managers in that division). If there is not total agreement amongst the managers, the Commissioner will make the final decision.
5. Only players on official league rosters may participate in league games.
6. Teams will have an equal number of participants in each game (as close as possible). If a team has 14 players and the opposing team has 12, one player should move from one team to the other to equate the number of players. No player should be moved twice in a season until all players have moved once.
7. All players should sit out a minimum of one inning defensively, pitchers excepted.

## Incident Reports

When any member of our league witnesses any unusual event (an ejection, poor sportsmanship, etc.), they should complete an Incident Report and submit it to any member of the Executive Committee. Similarly, if any member of our league witnesses a player, coach or manager act in a manner that is not in agreement with this Code of Conduct, they should complete an Incident Report and submit it to any member of the Executive Committee. The report will then be forwarded to the Commissioner who will act upon it immediately. Every manager and every member of the Executive Committee has a supply of Incident Reports.

The Commissioner will retain all Incident Reports received during the season to keep a 'paper trail' of repeat offenders. The Commissioner will review the report and decide on a course of action. For less serious offences, he will handle the matter himself. If he decides the incident is more serious, he will immediately suspend the offender and schedule a meeting of the Discipline Committee. This 'interim' suspension will be in effect until a decision is made by the Discipline Committee.

## Discipline Committee

The Discipline Committee is made up of 5 members of the WECSSO Executive. The Commissioner, the President of WECSSO and the Secretary of WECSSO will be on the Committee (if available). The others on the Committee will be chosen from the remaining members of the executive. The Commissioner will notify the player and his manager of the suspension and inform them that a meeting has been called. Prior to the meeting, the Commissioner shall receive if possible, a written statement from the accused to give his version of the incident. Any witnesses to the event should also submit a written report to the Commissioner (perhaps on an Incident Report form). In attendance at the meeting should be the complainant (and a witness) and the accused (and a witness).

The writer of the Incident Report (and his witness) shall enter the meeting first. They will explain to the Discipline Committee why the report was submitted and the response that they believe is necessary from the Committee. After responding to questions from the Committee, they will be asked to leave. Then the accused (and his witness) will enter the meeting and present their version of the incident. After questioning, they will be dismissed.

The Committee will then review what they have seen and heard and make a decision. The goal is to arrive at a unanimous decision by consensus. This decision is binding. The subject of the Incident Report is then asked to re-enter the meeting. The Commissioner will announce the decision of the Committee. If a further suspension is involved, the Commissioner will explain to the suspended player that he may not attend the complex during league games or attend any team practice.

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Playing Rules

1. All games shall be nine innings in length.
2. In the regular season, games tied after nine innings will be called, with no extra innings.
3. No new inning will start after 11:45 am.
4. In extreme weather conditions, teams can agree to play only seven or eight innings, rather than nine. If they do not agree, the lower number of innings will become the standard.  
Example: If one team wants to play seven innings and the other team wants to play nine, the game will be seven innings long. Consideration of the health and welfare of the players should be the primary concern.
5. Rained out games will not be rescheduled.
6. All innings shall consist of three outs or a maximum of five runs scored.  
Exception: In the last inning, there is no limit to the number of runs scored.
7. There shall be a mercy rule in effect for all games, including playoffs. If one team is ahead by fifteen runs or more after seven innings, or if the home team is ahead by fifteen runs or more after 6 ½ innings, the game is over and the team with the lead is the winner. A team losing by fifteen runs or more in the seventh inning or later may score as many runs as necessary to eliminate the possibility of a mercy.
8. Flip/Flop Rule:           REGULAR SEASON ONLY  
In games where the visiting team is ahead by seven or more runs at the end of eight innings (in a nine inning game) or end of six innings (in a seven inning game), the home team will bat first in the “all you can get” inning. The visiting team will then bat only if the game has been tied or the home team has taken the lead.
9. The home team will use the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout and will provide one new ball and one good used ball for each game. The visiting team will wear grey shirts.
10. In all divisions, the bases will be seventy (70) feet apart. A double base will be used at first base. The white bag shall be inside the foul line and be used by the fielder. The orange bag shall be outside the foul line and be used by the runner. The purpose is to avoid collisions. If there is a play made at first base, the runner must step on the orange bag. On a hit where there is no play made at first base, the runner may touch either bag.
11. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line, there shall be a ‘commitment line’ perpendicular to the baseline and 21 feet from the back of home plate. A base runner, having passed the commitment line, may not return to third base. If the catcher is in contact with the mat and in possession of the ball, the runner attempting to score is out. For scoring purposes, a second home plate will be positioned along an extension of the 1<sup>st</sup> base line and 5 feet from the backstop. The runner cannot be tagged out by anyone between the commitment line and home plate.
12. The pitching rubber shall be fifty (50) feet from the back of home plate. However, for safety reasons, a pitching zone is in effect. This zone is between 50 and 60 feet from home plate and the width of the pitching rubber. A strike zone mat (2 feet by

- 3 feet) will be placed at the leading edge of home plate and extend backwards toward the catcher. Legal pitches striking any part of the mat will be strikes. To be legal, the height of the pitch must be between 6 feet and 12 feet above the ground.
13. The pitcher cannot pitch the ball over the screen.
  14. For the safety of the pitcher, a pitching screen will be used in all divisions. For right-handed pitchers, the screen must be positioned to their left. For left-handed pitchers, the screen must be positioned to their right. The screen must be placed 5 feet in front of the pitching rubber to allow the pitcher to step behind the screen without taking a step back. The edge of the screen should be in line with the edge of the pitcher's box. If a batted ball hits the screen, the ball is dead. The pitcher must step behind the screen immediately after the pitch is released and remain there until the ball is contacted. If the pitcher makes no effort to get behind the screen, and makes a play, the ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base and all runners advance one base, if forced. If the pitcher continues to not use the screen, the umpire will have the pitcher removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. Any thrown ball that is in live play and hits the screen is considered a live ball and runners may advance at their own risk.
  15. It is the responsibility of the home team manager to set up and dismantle the screen before and after each game.
  16. Batting practice will be held from 9:00 am to 9:45 am on the diamond and with the use of the pitching screen. Home managers are responsible for bringing the batting practice buckets to the diamond. To ensure that all players have the opportunity to have batting practice within that time period, batters will be limited to 5 swings. Teams may elect to have a short infield practice from 9:45 am to 9:55 am. The game will start at 10:00 am.
  17. In all divisions, no batter/runner may be thrown out at first base by a player positioned in the outfield, i.e., a player standing on the grass.  
Interpretation (for all divisions): If the ball hits the grass, the batter cannot be thrown out at first base.
  18. In any at-bat, the batter has the option of not accepting a base on balls. He may remain at bat until he receives 3 strikes, fouls out or puts the ball in play. Once the batter decides not to accept the base on ball, he cannot change his mind.  
Exception: The defensive team can insist on the player going to first base with the base on balls but only once per game per player.
  19. Scoreboards: The manager of the home team is responsible for delivery of the scoreboard to and from the diamond, as well as setting up the scoreboard on the backstop before each game. After consultation with both managers, the umpire will enter the numbers of runs scored on the board after each half inning.
  20. Any foul ball caught before touching the ground is an out.
  21. Defensively, teams will field a pitcher, a catcher, a maximum of 5 infielders and a maximum of 5 outfielders.
  22. Teams may field 12 players defensively, with a maximum of 5 outfielders. If one team has fewer than 12 players, the opposing team can supply a catcher, allowing the other team to use 5 outfielders. If the team with 11 players does not want a

- catcher from the other team, they can play with 4 outfielders, but the opposing team can still use 5 outfielders.
23. Managers shall prepare, before each game, a batting order consisting of at least 9 players, all of which must be present at the start of the game. To the bottom of this list, add any players as they arrive late. All players shall bat in this order, but a maximum of 12 will take the field defensively at any one time. Players may leave and re-enter the game defensively at any time. However, a player may not change his original batting position.
24. Equipment
- a) No metal spikes will be allowed.
  - b) Only bats that have the USSSA “thumb print” logo will be considered legal.
  - c) If a player uses an illegal bat, he will be ejected from the game and suspended for the next 5 games. A second offence will result in a suspension of one year.
  - d) It is the responsibility of the player (not the manager or the umpire) to use proper equipment.
25. Ejections
- If a player is ejected, for any reason, he is suspended for the balance of that game and the next game that his team plays.

## Playoffs

1. The home team in all Championship games will be the team with the higher standing in the round robin games.  
In the event of two or more teams tied after round robin games, the deadlock shall be broken by (in order):
  - a) results of game(s) between the tied teams.
  - b) best +/- in games between the tied teams (a maximum 7 run difference per game)
  - c) best +/- in all playoff gamesNo team will be eliminated from playoffs by the +/- criteria. A tie-breaker game must be played in that case.
2. All playoff games must be played to completion (if possible). A game ended by the mercy rule is a complete game. If a game is halted prior to completion, for whatever reason, it will be treated as a suspended game and continued from that point later.  
Note: An eligible player who was not in the original lineup but is present and ready to participate in the continuation of the game shall be added to the lineup as a late arrival. See Rule 4.
3. In the playoffs, if a game is tied after 9 innings, the tie-breaker rule shall be used. The offensive team starts its turn at bat with the player scheduled to bat last in that half-inning being placed at second base as a runner. The runner on second base may be substituted in accordance with the substitution rules.  
In the extra innings, there is no limit to the number of runs scored by either team.
4. There should not be any forfeits in the playoffs. Forfeits will only occur when and if all avenues to put a team on the field have been exhausted. If they only have 10 or 11 players, they can borrow a player from the opposing team to be the catcher. This catcher will make all plays as a regular catcher would. Teams can play with 9 players [borrow a catcher, two fielders short]. Once the number of available players is less than 9, the game will be forfeited.
5. The Championship game in each division will be scheduled for the day of the week on which that division plays its games during the regular season. Example: The Blue Division championship will be played on a Tuesday or a Thursday. The Red and Green Division championships would be played on a Monday or Wednesday.
6. No playoff games will be scheduled after the last Thursday of September.

1. Bases will be run according to “regular baseball” rules.
2. Sliding is allowed
3. If a “hot box” occurs, runners are put out by a tag, not by a force-out
4. For the most part, it is expected that players will run for themselves. In both the regular season and the playoffs, the number of courtesy runners in a game is unlimited, but a particular runner can only be used once in the same inning. If a runner is on base when it becomes his turn to bat, there will be no “out”. Simply replace the runner with another runner.
5. In both the regular season and the playoffs, if it is known in advance that a team will be short-handed (less than 13), the team can use a player from the team that has a bye that day. If none are available, the team can call up a player from the Blue or the Green Division to complete the lineup. **Any additions to the lineup must be approved by the Convener.** Teams should only call up sufficient players to bring their numbers to 13. The called-up player(s) will bat at the bottom of the order.

1. Bases will be run according to “regular baseball” rules.
2. Sliding is allowed.
3. If a “hot box” occurs, runners are put out by a tag, not by a force-out.
4. A defensive line consisting of an arc 175 feet from home plate shall be used. Any player standing on the grass at the time of the pitch must be behind this line and remain there until contact is made. All infielders must be standing on the dirt until contact is made. If this is violated, the offense has the option of taking the result of the play or an award of one base to the batter and all runners.
5. For the most part, it is expected that players will run for themselves. In both the regular season and the playoffs, the number of courtesy runners in a game is unlimited, but a particular runner can only be used once in the same inning. If a runner is on base when it becomes his turn to bat, there will be no “out”. Simply replace the runner with another runner.
6. Some batters will be allowed “runners from the screen”. Those batters must be identified and approved by the Division Convener prior to the game. The runner from the screen will be the batter that was the last out. If that runner chooses not to run, the batter will not be allowed a runner from the screen and will have to run to first.
7. If it is known in advance that a team will be short-handed (less than 13), the team manager can call on (i) a Blue Division player who has not yet been assigned to a team or if none are available (ii) a player from the bye team on that day, or if none are available, (iii) a player from the Green Division to complete the lineup. A team should only call up sufficient players to bring their number to 13 and managers must try to call up a player of comparable ability. A called up player will bat at the bottom of the order. Note: During the playoffs, only option (iii) is allowed with the approval of the Convener.

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2. Sliding is not allowed. If a runner slides, he will be called out.
3. To avoid collisions, all outs on the bases are to be "safety/no tag required" outs. In addition, however, a base runner may be tagged out between bases.
4. If a batter hits a foul ball with two strikes, he gets a courtesy "no-play". If he hits it a second time, he is out.
5. To avoid injury, when a play is being made at 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base, the runner will not run to the base but instead will run to the side and past the base. These plays will use the "scoring line" concept. Runners will run to the side of the base away from a possible throw. If there is no play being made at the base, runners must touch the base. When a runner runs wide of the base because of an impending play at that base, and the thrown ball gets by the fielder attempting to make the play, the runner may continue to the next base without returning to touch that base.
6. No "hot boxes" are allowed. A runner advancing to the next base may change his mind and make a move to return to the previous base. If he does, he must return to that previous base. There is no changing their mind a second time, creating a "hot box". Similarly, if a runner stops momentarily, then decides to continue forward (without turning back), he cannot change his mind again. He must continue forward. Should the runner stop with indecision, the fielder may throw to either base for the force out.
7. For the most part, it is expected that players will run for themselves. The number of courtesy runners in a game is unlimited, but a particular runner can only be used once in the same inning. If a runner is on base when it becomes his turn to bat, there will be no "out". Simply replace the runner with another runner.
8. Some batters will be allowed "runners from the screen". Those batters must be identified and approved by the Division Convener prior to the game. The runner from the screen will be the batter that was the last out. If that runner chooses not to run, the batter will not be allowed a runner from the screen and will have to run to first.
9. In the playoffs, when one team is eliminated, the remaining teams can borrow a player from that eliminated team if they are short-handed (less than 14 players), but that player must be of equal playing ability. The move must be approved by the Division Convener.
10. The infield fly rule will only be in effect if the infielder is within the base lines when making the play.