

**JOHNSTON COED SOFTBALL LEAGUE
RULES AND REGULATIONS
2009**

1. Teams – The league will consist of eleven (11) teams. If you know your team cannot play on a certain date, please let the commissioner know before the schedule is made. Once the schedule is made, no games will be changed.
2. Starting times: Games will start at 6:00pm, 7:15pm, and 8:30pm at Mazzulla field on Tuesdays, and Fridays, and 7:30, 8:45 at Woodlake on Tuesday nights, and 6:00pm and 7:15pm on Friday nights, unless otherwise noted or changed. **All games will be played at Mazzulla Field and Woodlake I.** If a team can satisfy the minimal requirements for the starting lineup (see rule # 6), then the game will begin as scheduled, otherwise, there will be a fifteen (15) minute grace period **for the first game only**, before a forfeit is awarded. **Later games will start five (5) minutes after the conclusion of a previous game.** Line-ups should be ready and exchanged with the other team **and the official scorer** no later than five minutes prior to the start of the game. Line-up must include the following: Player's name, number and position – no exceptions. **PLEASE NOTE: If a team fails to field a team without prior notice, that team will be responsible to pay the entire fee for the umpire(s) and scorer. **If a grace period is used, the game will be played under a 60 minute time limit from 6:00pm.
3. Rosters/Insurance Waivers: Each team is permitted to have thirty (30) people on their roster. Coaches are responsible for having each player sign a roster sheet before the players can participate in the first game of the season and given to the **Johnston Recreation Department Official** after the first week of play. Please include player numbers next to their names on the roster. No male on the roster may be currently active, previously active, or played in a higher classification tournament or playoff game during the previous year for an USSSA Major Division or higher classification team or league. **Please see 2009 ruling from the USSSA.** Additions to the rosters must be submitted to the coaches immediately and no team can add to their roster after June 5.

Final rosters must be submitted to Vin Jackvony no later than May 25th, and must include the player's uniform number and signature. The penalty for non-submittal is game forfeiture until the roster is submitted. After the roster is submitted, no names may be added without the approval of all the team managers. Using an ineligible player or an illegal player will result in a forfeit for each and every game that this violation occurred. Following May 25th, if a player participates in a game and is not wearing his/her shirt number that is submitted on the final roster, the player will be suspended for one game and the team involved in this incident will automatically forfeit the game regardless of where they are in the inning in either a regular season game or playoff game. **Prior approval for using a player who is not in uniform may be given by the opposing manager on a one-time basis.** It is encouraged that coaches check the rosters of the teams they are facing prior to the start of each game to check for discrepancies.

Players must have played at least **half** of the games in the regular season in order to qualify for the playoffs. Questionable players or special circumstances should be brought to the Ruling Board. The Ruling Board will consist of the team managers with each team having one (1) vote. Teams involved in any dispute will reclude themselves from the vote. All votes will be by secret ballot unless otherwise amended. Three members of the Johnston Recreation Staff will also be on the board.

4. Game ball – Home team will supply one new 12 inch .40 core ball and one new 11 inch .44 core ball. Visiting team will supply one new 12 inch .40 core ball and one used 11 inch .44 core ball.
5. Inclement Weather – Games will consist of seven (7) innings. In case of inclement weather, as determined by the umpire, five full innings will constitute a full game. If four (4) innings have been played but less than five (5) innings have been completed, the game will be resumed from its point of suspension at a later date. **Johnston Recreation Department will determine if games need to be cancelled prior to the start of the games.** This decision will be made by 3 P.M. whenever possible. If a game is cancelled or postponed due to inclement weather or poor field conditions, the **two team managers are to schedule a make-up date. Please refer to www.johnstonrec.com for cancellations.**
6. Line-ups – A minimum of nine (9) and no more than eleven (11) players will play in the field, of which at least four (4) must be females. A team is permitted to start a game with three (3) females; however, a batting spot must be allocated for a fourth female who will be considered an automatic out until she arrives. If the fourth female is not inserted into the line-up by the end of the fourth inning, forfeiture will result. Each team is permitted two (2) exemptions to this rule, but the automatic out provision remains. Each team is responsible for notifying the Ruling Board when exemptions have been used. If BOTH teams only have three (3) females, the game can be played; however, if additional females arrive before the fourth inning, they must be inserted into the game. Neither team will lose their exemption if play has already started and additional females arrive.

The line-up **may not** have more than two (2) males in succession before a female must bat. **A team cannot have three (3) male batters in a row during any inning.** The only exception to this rule is if a team is playing with three (3) female players, then an out will be given in the fourth female position. In this case, three (3) males would be batting “in a row”, however, they would be taking an out in the fourth female batting position.

No more than seven (7) males can play defense. If an injury occurs to a female after the start of the game, that female may reenter the game and take her original spot or an automatic out will result in her line-up spot if she is unable to continue to play. A replacement female may be put in her position in the batting order. A minimum of three (3) females must be in the field.

The batter will start with a one ball and one strike count.

7. Designated Hitters – a team may opt to use a DH. The team **MUST** use both an extra male hitter and extra female hitter. These players are ones who bat but do not take the field. The Extra Players must remain the lineup for the entire game and can be substituted. A player on the field can also be switched to an Extra Player spot as long as there is both a male and female extra player. **However, should an Extra Player leave the game and no replacement is put into the line-up, an automatic out will occur whenever that spot comes up in the batting order. A team could opt to take out the other DH for the remainder of the game and not take the out.**

8. Substitutions/Re-entry – Batting order substitutions must be made on a gender for gender basis. The lone exception is a team starting with more than four (4) females in its batting order. The manager can do such a substitution if it is declared to the other manager prior to the start of the game. The league has adopted the USSA rules for reentry into the game for players who have been removed from the game. Reentry is permitted once per each batting order slot, and must be gender for gender.
9. Defensive Positioning – when a female is batting, infielders cannot come in closer than an imaginary line connecting the bases, once the ball is hit, players can move freely. Encroachment violations will result in a warning first, followed by awarding first base for any future violations.
10. Home run limit – When playing on a field with a fenced in outfield, each team is permitted two (2) out of the park home runs per gender. Additional out of the park homeruns will be considered an out, with runners not being allowed to advance.
11. Runners – each team is permitted a courtesy runner(s), specified at the beginning of the game. The courtesy runner **MUST** be of the same gender that made the last out in the previous inning. If not, outs are traced backwards until a player of the same gender is located. If a courtesy runner is needed in the first inning, the player of the same gender batting in the last spot in the batting order will be used.

Pinch runners of the same sex can be used at any time; however, a player replaced by a pinch runner **CANNOT** reenter the game. Runners cannot leave a base until the ball crosses home plate, or contact has been made.
12. Bunting – Female batters can bunt in any fashion they choose, including half swings.
13. Umpires – Fees for umpires for the 2009 season will be \$24.00 per umpire if two are being used. **If an umpire does not show up fifteen minutes after the start of a game, the game can be cancelled unless the two managers agree to having someone umpire the game.** Each team is responsible to pay half.
14. Playoffs – Will follow USSSA regulations – once the standings of the teams have been determined, a playoff structure will be made.
15. Fighting and foul language – if a fight (verbal or otherwise) occurs with player vs. player, player vs. umpires, player vs. coach before, during, or after a game, or if a player or coach physically threatens another coach or player or umpire, the player(s) involved are suspended for that game and the NEXT THREE (3) GAMES. **Players involved in a second offense of this nature will be suspended for the remainder of the season. Players or coach/manager involved in a second offense of this nature will be suspended for the remainder of the season. The commissioner can overrule or change the length of a suspension at his discretion.**

- 16. The Texas Swear Rule will be in affect this season.** If you swear while you are at bat, it is an out. If you pop up to the pitcher, and you swear, the next batter is out. (if the ball is caught, that makes 2 outs). If you are on base, and you swear, the batter in the box is out. If you swear while playing the field, the person next up at bat for you is out, so you will start that inning with 1 out, and the batter who would have been on deck batting first.
17. Entrance fee for 2009 will be \$450.00 per team.
18. Trophy – will be awarded to the winning team at the end of the season. (Sweatshirts /long sleeve shirts / T-Shirts can be substituted for trophies)
19. Fifteen run rule – a team ahead by fifteen or more runs after five (5) full innings of play well be declared the winner of the game. A 20 run rule will be enforced after three (3) full innings of play.
20. USSSA softball rules will prevail in those instances not specifically noted.
21. Beverages are allowed at the fields; however, alcoholic beverages are not permitted at the fields due to municipal regulations. Teams are responsible for cleaning the surrounding areas after games and for respecting the neighborhoods in which we play. Our league permit is at risk if we are found to be in violation of this regulation. **At no time should a team consume alcohol while in the dugout, or on the field.**
22. Uniforms with number on each shirt are mandatory for regular season games and for playoff games. Teams disregarding the uniform rule will not be allowed to play until this requirement is met.
23. Questionable calls – only the team coach/manager is allowed to discuss a call with the umpire. **Individual players are not allowed to question calls with an umpire. The official scorer at the fields will have the final say on any questions pertaining to the league rules if the umpire cannot settle the dispute. You CANNOT argue balls and strikes.**

MISCELLANEOUS RULES:

- A female may elect to take an automatic walk if a male is walked before her. If the female decides to hit, the male may not automatically advance to 2nd base.
- All batters will begin with a 1 and 1 count
- No male/female or female/male defensive switch can take place in the middle of an inning. The only exception are: 1 – an injury; 2- a pitching change
- No metal spikes are allowed.
- No player may be younger than eighteen (18). Proof of age is required for questionable individuals.
- Titanium, triple, double wall bats having a BPF of over 1.2 will not be allowed in play. **Composite bats will not be allowed in play. All other USSSA banned bats are not allowed as well.**
- First base will consist of two bases. Players must make every attempt to use the outside base. League rules dictate that the outside base is optional but encouraged, and a player will only be ruled out if in the opinion of the umpire the runner was trying to interfere with the defensive player.
- Only seven (7) males may play in the field.
- If a team forfeits (or fails to field a team) without prior notice, that team is responsible to pay the full amount for the umpire and scorer. The recreation department will need at least one (1) day notice if a team cannot play. Umpires are paid when they show up whether a game is played or not.
- If a team consistently forfeits, (more than 2 games without notice), they will and be asked to leave the league. No refund will be given.
- The scorer will be paid \$7.00 per team per game

NEW RULES:

1. There will be 2 umpires
2. If a male walks, and a female follows - she will still have the option to walk. If she chooses to hit, the male stays on first base
3. If you are ejected, you are gone for 3 games. No questions asked. Do not bother calling to plead your case. The coach WILL NOT be suspended.
4. If you cause a player to slide using a fake tag, you are ejected
5. Again, NO COMPOSITE BATS! The umpires will inspect your bats before the game, if there is a question on a bat, it will not be used. Some bats that are composite do not say it, the umpire will know.

New rules continued...

6. You cannot argue balls and strikes - all questions to the umpire should be handled by the coaches only
7. If a male hits the ball up the middle (width of the rubber, height of the pitcher) will be an automatic out. (umpires discretion)
8. Softballs will still be 12" for men, 11" for female - however, the men will be using a .40 core ball, and the women a .44 core.
9. If a player comes to the plate with a composite bat, it will be an offensive ejection. (player is out, and each time player is up (or batter in his/her spot) it will be an automatic out). Second offense (anytime during the season, any player) will result in a forfeit.