

**SOFTBALL BERMUDA  
LOCAL PLAYING RULES  
(Co-ed Divisions)**

**2024**

## Commercial Softball League

These rules should be read in conjunction with standard International Softball Federation (“ISF”) rules for slow pitch softball. They are variations on the standard rules made with the objective of promoting the objectives of the Softball Bermuda.

The Executive Committee is solely responsible for the interpretation of these rules and its decision on such interpretation is final. Guidance notes are given below, where appropriate, in italics. These guidance notes do not form part of the rules but are an indication of the Executive Committee's interpretation. References are made to relevant ISF rules that are modified.

1 Michael Preece softball stadium playing field is to be regarded as having the minimum acceptable dimensions for playing Softball Bermuda slow pitch softball games. (ISF Rule 2 Sec 1)

2 No shoes with spikes (of any material) or metal cleats are permitted. (ISF Rule 3 Sec 5)

3 All players on a team must wear the same colour shirts. There is no requirement for uniformity in the colour and style of shorts or pants or caps worn. Numbers on shirts are not required. Ball caps are not required. (ISF Rule 3 Sec 8)

*Players not wearing the correct team colour shirt will not be permitted to participate in the game.*

4 In addition to exposed jewelry not being permitted, players may not wear curlers or beads. (ISF Rule 3 Sec 8g)

*Players may be asked to remove jewelry, and if they fail to do so, will be ejected from the game.*

5 A team shall consist of 10 players, or 11 players if using an Extra Player (“EP”) or Designated Player (“DP”) or 12 players if using both an EP and a DP. If using an EP and/or a DP, the EP and/or DP may be female only if there are at least 2 other female players in the line-up. (ISF Rule 4 Sec 3)

The decision to use an EP must be made prior to the start of the game.

Regarding the DP rule, the affected defensive player “cannot” play offense for the duration of the game. (ISF Rule 4 Sec 3)

6 A team must have at least 8 players present to start and/or continue a game. If starting or continuing with 8 players, at least 1 fielder and batter must be female and there may be no more than 7 male fielders. The missing player(s) shall be an “automatic out” in the batting order. The missing position(s) may be filled at any time during the game by a player who is on the team roster at the start of the game. (ISF Rule 4 Sec 2a)

**Where there are only 8 players available including 2 female players, a team may choose to play with just the 8 players and will not be charged with an “automatic out” however, they must play the game with only 8 fielding and batting positions.**

**If the game starts and a team has 10 players on their official line-up sheet and subsequently determines that the 10<sup>th</sup> player is a “no show”, they will not be able to revert to a 9-player batting order without penalty. The decision to play with 9 players must be made before the start of the game.**

Notwithstanding the above, every player who is ejected from the game must be replaced in the line-up. Failure to replace an ejected player results in forfeiture of the game.

*A team with 11 offensive players may lose two players through injury or other causes (not ejection) and may continue without replacing them provided at least 1 remaining player is female. There will be 2 automatic outs in the batting order.*

7 A ten-minute grace period will be permitted after the scheduled start of the game to allow for the late  
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arrival of players. Further extension beyond that time may be given at the discretion of the umpire. (ISF Rule 5 Sec 3f)

*If the umpire is satisfied that additional players will arrive shortly, he may extend the grace period. The objective is to allow games to be played wherever possible.*

- 8 A regulation game shall consist of seven innings but shall not last beyond one and a half hours from the start of the game. The umpire's decision on time keeping is final. (ISF Rule 5 Sec 3). A game is considered official after 5 innings have been completed or 4 ½ innings if the home team is leading.

*The umpire may adjust the time available if the start of the game is delayed because of rule 7 above. However, the team not at fault must not be disadvantaged by the umpire's decision.*

- 9 If the game is tied after seven innings or one and a half hours, tiebreaker innings shall be played until the game reaches a conclusion, if time permits. (ISF Rule 5 Sec 6)

- 10 All Softball Bermuda games (regular season and playoffs) that are not considered regulation shall be replayed from the beginning. Original line-ups may be changed when the game is replayed. (ISF Rule 5 Sec 3g)

- 11 The game shall be called if the home team is leading by fifteen or more runs any time after 4 1/2 innings have been completed. The game shall be called if the visiting team is leading by fifteen or more runs when 5 complete innings have been played or thereafter at the end of any completed innings by the home team. This rule applies to all CSL games (regular season and playoffs). (ISF Rule 5 Sec 5)

- 12 The game will be called if a team is trailing by twenty-five or more runs after three completed innings, with all game statistics remaining intact. This rule applies to all Softball Bermuda games (regular season and playoffs). (ISF Rule 5 Sec 5)

- 13 **Flip/Flop rule:**

In the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, any team trailing by 15 or more runs will, after completion of their turn at bat, return offensively to play their half of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning. If they are unable to reduce their deficit to fewer than 15 runs, the game shall be called. If they are successful in reducing their deficit to fewer than 15 runs, their opponents will also have an opportunity to play two offensive innings back-to-back, with the understanding that during their period on offense, should they increase their lead to 15 or more runs, the game will be called.

- 14 At least two positions in the batting order must be exclusively occupied by females throughout the entire game. (ISF Rule 7 Sec 2)

- 15 When a female player is at bat, **three** outfielders must stand at least 200 feet from home plate before a pitch is made and must remain there until the ball has been hit.

*To facilitate enforcement of this rule, a line will be painted in the outfield following an arc 200 feet from home plate.*

*If this rule is contravened, the manager of the offended team has the option of having the batter take first base, with all base runners advancing one base (whether forced or not) or taking the result of the play.*

- 16 **(Please read this section in conjunction with Softball Bermuda Rule 17 below)**

A female on deck batter may opt to accept a base on balls (walk) if the immediately preceding male batter receives a base on balls. The female batter must notify the umpire of her intention to accept a base on balls prior to receiving a pitch.

For the purpose of this rule the female on deck batter shall be the female offensive player whose name

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follows the name of the batter in the batting order at the time of the first pitch to the batter.

Any attempt by the offensive team to confuse the defensive team by placing a male batter in the on-deck circle when the on-deck batter is female, shall nullify that on-deck female batter's option to walk. (ISF Rule 7 Sec 1)

*The female batter nullifies her option to walk if (a) she is not in the "on-deck" circle prior to "ball three" being called by the umpire or (b) no member of the offensive team has notified both the umpire and the opposing pitcher that the "on-deck" batter is female.*

### 17 In effect for all divisions:

**(a) In circumstances where a female batter elects to walk after the preceding male batter has been walked, there will be no penalty for the male player not touching first base enroute to second base.**

**(b) Where a team is leading their opponents by 5 runs, the next female batter will not be allowed to walk but must take her turn at-bat.**

### 18 Once a team has hit one out-of-the-park ("OOP") home run in an inning, the batter will be awarded first base for a subsequent OOP hit (recorded as a "single"). There will be no advancement of base runners unless forced by the batter taking first base. Only one OOP single will be allowed per inning after a team has hit its allowed OOP home run. **All OOP hits in the inning, subsequent to the "one" allowable OOP single, will result in the batter being called "out".**

A fair ball assisted over the outfield fence in fair territory by a defensive player prior to any OOP home run being hit will be considered an OOP home run. (ISF Rule 8 Sec 1g)

A fair ball assisted over the outfield fence in fair territory by a defensive player after the OOP home run has been hit will result in the batter and all base runners advancing two bases.

***Exception: OOP home runs hit by a female batter will count as a homerun regardless of when it occurs. If it is the first home run of the inning, it will count as the team's one allowable OOP home run.***

### 19 The Hit & Sit rule is optional on all OOP home runs. The batter and all runners have the option to not run the bases and just return to the dugout. All or some of the players can choose this option. No runner will be called out.

### 20 No player or official may smoke while on the playing field or while in the dugout..

### 21 No alcohol may be consumed by any player or official in the playing field or while in the dugout. Any player or official contravening this rule is to be immediately ejected from the game.

### 22 A batter will start his/her turn at bat with an initial count of 1 ball and 1 strike. (Adopted for 2000-01 season)

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- 23 (Adopted for 2002-03 season)  
A safety line will be used at home plate such that all plays at the plate require a runner to cross the line instead of touching the plate. **Any runner who crosses between the safety line and home plate, or touches home plate, on a close play at the plate will be called “out”. Any runner who touches home plate when there is no apparent play at the plate will not be called “out”.**

***Exception: If the runner contacts (with force) any defensive player standing on the plate, the runner will be called “out”.***

In conjunction with the safety line, a commitment line will be marked about one third of the way between third base and home plate. A runner crossing this line has committed to continuing to the safety line at home plate (see further explanation below). In effect this rule makes all plays at the plate a ‘force’ play, where the defensive player must play the plate at all times – tagging the runner is not an option. The intent is to prevent collisions at the plate where a force is not in effect. Any attempts by runners to dislodge the ball from the possession of a player affecting the force play will result in an automatic out to the runner and a dead ball. (ISF Rule 8, sec. 9r)

*Once the commitment line has been crossed, the base runner may not return to 3<sup>rd</sup> base.*

*Exception: Where a runner does not “tag-up” on a caught fly ball and as a result has advanced beyond the commitment line, the runner may attempt to return to their previously occupied base to avoid a double play.*

- 24 A female batter, who fouls off strike three, will be allowed one additional strike/swing. If that swing is a foul ball as well, the batter is out.
- 25 If a player is injured during the game, he does not have to position himself in the field as long as there are 8 other fielders on the field at all times.