

Rural Ottawa Softball

Local Rule Guidelines

Regular Season Local Rule Variations

ROSA follows Softball Canada rules. See the summary page for local rules changes different from Softball Canada. This summary is also available for download on the ROSA web site.

Game Length

Games are to be played to a maximum of 7 innings or a 2-hour time limit. Games may finish before that (see **Time Limit** below). Coaches should make every attempt to not exceed the 2-hour limit. There may be another game starting after this game or sunlight may be an issue.

Time Limit

Mites (U10): No new inning may start after 1 hour and 40 minutes. For example, if the game starts at 6:30pm, no new inning would start after 8:10pm. If the top half of the inning is over 1:40, the game completes as normal rules. If the bottom half of an inning completes and the time is over 1:40, the game ends.

Squirts (U12), Peewee (U14), Bantam (U16), Midget (U18): If any inning completes after the 1 hour and 25-minute time, the next inning shall be deemed the last inning. For example, if the game started at 6:30pm, the last inning may not start before 7:55pm. If the final inning does not complete before the 2-hour maximum time limit, the game is over and the score reverts to the previous inning.

Mercy Rule

Mites (U10): The maximum for either team can score is 5 runs per inning including the final inning. See **Last Inning** rule below.

Squirts (U12), Peewee (U14), Bantam (U16), Midget (U18): The maximum for either team is 4 runs per inning, except the last inning. See **Last Inning** rule below.

Last Inning

Mites (U10): The home team has the option of batting in the bottom half of the last inning regardless of the score. The runs per inning mercy rule (above) still applies in the final inning for maximum runs.

Squirts (U12), Peewee (U14), Bantam (U16), Midget (U18): The regular Softball Ontario inning rules apply (i.e. unlimited runs until 3 outs or game time is called). The runs per inning mercy rule (above) does not apply to the final inning. Note: the home team only needs to win by one run then the game is over.

Knock-Out Rule

Squirts (U12), Peewee (U14), Bantam (U16), Midget (U18): The following knockout mercy rule applies to Squirts and above and shall be used for all regular season games.

- 1) If a team is ahead by 15 runs in the next-to-final inning, the game is called. The final inning is not played, unless the losing coach decides to keep playing.
- 2) If it is less than 14 runs, the home team has the option of playing the final inning as an endless run inning or if losing, a simple 4 run mercy regular inning. If during the final inning, the run differential reaches 15, the game is over.
- 3) A coach retains the right to end a game at any time (i.e. forfeit the game).

Players

Each team must play with at least 7 players. Otherwise the game is a forfeit. Every effort should be made to play the game. Once a game has been declared a forfeit, players for the opposing team may lend players to the other team so that the team can field a proper number of players. The game may then be played as normal.

Automatic Out

There are no automatic out rules (e.g. for having less than 9 players). For example, if a player leaves the game, that player is crossed off the batting list and move to the next batter with no outs for that position. The same applies to an injured player – I just skip them with no out.

Extra Outfielder

Extra outfielders are not allowed. Maximum allowed on the field is 9 players.

Batting Order

All players will bat during the game and no players may sit out or intentionally not be played during the game. All players are assigned to a fixed batting order which includes all players at the field and all players must bat in that order. When the last player bats, the first player on the list bats next. Players may not be substituted out of the list or into the list. For example, a 12 player team cannot make a batting order of 9 players and substitute 3 players into and out of the order throughout the game. A 12 player team would have a fixed 12 player batting order that must be followed unless there is a special circumstance (e.g. a player injury).

Any late players are added to the bottom of the batting order and may not be placed randomly within the line-up. Unless the player's batting position has not come up during regular play. If so, they may bat where originally assigned.

Complaints concerning batting order violations must be made at the time of the infraction and brought to the attention of the plate umpire immediately when detected. Failure to do so will result in no action being taken.

Dropped Third Strike

Mites and Squirts: On a drop third strike the batter is automatically out. The ball is still live.

Peewee, Bantam, Midget, Junior: The regular rule applies.

Fielding Substitution

Players may be freely substituted any time between the bench and the field.

Pitching Substitution

Mites (U10): A pitcher may only pitch two innings. If a pitcher only pitches a partial inning and is substituted out for another pitcher, that inning still counts towards the maximum allowed innings pitched.

Squirts (12) and Peewee (U14): A pitcher may only pitch 3 innings. If a pitcher only pitches a partial inning and is substituted out for another pitcher, that inning still counts towards the maximum allowed innings pitched.

Bantam (U16), Midget (U18): A pitcher may pitch for a maximum of 12 outs per game.

Pitching Distance and Rules

See the Field Dimensions in Appendix A for the pitching distances.

Pitchers must start with two feet on the rubber. The following clarification were made regarding pitching based on new Softball Canada rules for Boys Bantam-Midget and Girls Midget only. These rules do not apply to Girls Bantam.

- Hop is allowed (no crow hopping).
- Players may start with one foot on plate.
- Pitchers may have one foot back.
- Pitcher may not step back.
- Pitching distance increased to 44' for Boys Bantam-Midget.

Lead-Off

Mites (U10), Squirts (U12): There is no lead off until the ball crosses the plate.

Peewee (U14), Bantam (U16), Midget (U18): No lead off until the pitcher releases the ball.

Stealing Restrictions

Mites (U10): There is no stealing home on any exchange between the pitcher and catcher (and vice-versa). If the catcher attempts to throw out a player at any base, the runner may steal home.

Squirts (U12), Pee wee (U14), Bantam (U16), Midget (U18): There are no stealing restrictions beyond the regular rules and **Lead-Off** above.

Infield Fly Rule

Mites (U10) and Squirts (U12): The infield fly rule is not used. Ball is live.

Pee wee (U14), Bantam (U16), Midget (U18): The regular infield fly rule applies.

Throwing of Bat

The batter is automatically out and it is a dead ball.

Dress Code

All players must wear a shirt with numbers on the back. Baseball caps are not required. Shorts are not allowed.

Jewellery

The wearing of jewellery is now allowed under the regular rules. But, it is umpire's discretion whether certain jewellery is allowed or not.

Helmets

Helmets must be worn by all offensive players. Each association has their own rule regarding mandatory chin straps. Helmets without chin straps are allowed.

All Mites (U10), Squirts (U12) and Pee wee(U14) level must wear a protective cage on their helmet.

Face Mask

All pitcher from Mites (U10), Squirts (U12) and Pee wee(U14) level must wear a face mask.

Score Keeping

Each team must record their score and the opponent's score in a score book in a complete game format. Game scores must be verified at the end of each inning. If there is any discrepancy in the final game score, BOTH score books must be brought to the home field association. The judgment of the game score by home field association the is final.

Scorekeepers should make note of start time as declared by the plate umpire (to the closest 5 min.). Scorekeepers are to ensure the final score is agreed to with the both teams and communicated to ROSA for standings. See the procedure for reporting ROSA scores for more information.

Appendix A: Field Dimensions

Division	Gender	Ball Size	Pitching Distance	Base Distance
Mites (U10)	Male	11"	30'	45'
Mites (U10)	Female	11"	28'	45'
Squirts (U12)	Male	11"	35'	55'
Squirts (U12)	Female	11"	33'	55'
Peewee (U14)	Male	12"	40'	60'
Peewee (U14)	Female	12"	38'	60'
Bantam (U16)	Male	12"	42'	60'
Bantam (U16)	Female	12"	40'	60'
Midget (U18)	Male	12"	46'	60'
Midget (U18)	Female	12"	40'	60'
Bantam-Midget	Male	12"	44'	60'
Bantam-Midget	Female	12"	40'	60'

Appendix B: Clarification on Obstruction and Interference

Here are the rules as clarified by Softball Ontario. ROSA does not have a local rule for obstruction or interference. ROSA will follow Softball Ontario's rules.

Interference:

- Typically an act by an offensive player.
- Also possible to have umpire interference and spectator interference.
- Results in "Dead Ball" being called (exception - umpire interference).
- Results in an out if by an offensive player.
- Common misconception - catcher's interference is actually catcher's obstruction.

Sec. 55 INTERFERENCE

- Is the act of:
 - a. An offensive player or team member that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play.
 - b. An umpire who impedes a catcher's attempt to throw out a runner who is off a base.
 - c. An umpire who is hit with a fair-batted ball prior to it passing an infielder excluding the pitcher.
 - d. A spectator who reaches into the playing field and impedes a fielder playing the ball.

Obstruction:

- Is an act by a defensive player.
- Results in a delayed dead ball.
- Award is determined at the end of the play (exception - if the obstructed runner is called out).
- An obstruction call does not entitle the obstructed runner to keep attempting to advance until played upon.

Sec. 62 OBSTRUCTION

- Is the act of:
 - a. A defensive player or team member that hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.
 - b. A fielder, while:
 - 1) not in possession of the ball; or
 - 2) not in the act of fielding a batted ball;
 - who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running the bases.
- NOTE: A fielder with possession of the ball may cause obstruction by:
 - 1. Pushing a runner off a base; or
 - 2. Impeding the progress of a runner while not in the act of making a play on the runner.

Section 8.7.c

- When a fielder obstructs the runner from making a base, or impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases; if the fielder is:
 - 1) Not in possession of the ball; or
 - 2) Not in the act of fielding a batted ball; or
 - 3) Making a fake tag without the ball.

Section 8.9.q

When a defensive player has the ball, and is waiting for the runner, and the runner remains on his feet and deliberately crashes into the defensive player.

NOTE: If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected.

To summarize:

1. Fielders must get out of the way of the runner when no play at the base.
2. Catcher or fielder does not have ball, runner hits the catcher or fielder standing up; runner not out due to fielder blocking plate – (obstruction rule 8.7.c.1 or 8.7.c.2)
3. Catcher has ball, runner hits the catcher standing up; runner automatically out (interference rule 8.9.q)
4. Catcher has ball, runner slides into catcher; runner safe/out depending on play
5. Catcher has ball, runner avoids the catcher but is standing up; runner safe/out depending on play
6. If the Runner deliberately crashes into the defensive player, the runner is out. NOTE: If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected.

Note: There is no Softball Canada rule for “must slide”.

Note: If in the umpire’s judgment the ball the catcher and the runner all converge on the same place at the same time, it is simply a wreck and neither interference nor obstruction.