

2024 DDSPL Rules & Regulations

1. General Gameplay

1.1 Games will consist of 7 innings with start times of 7:00 pm and 8:45 pm. A grace period of 5 minutes will be granted to a team that is incapable of fielding a legal 10 player lineup (which must include at least 2 women), after which teams may begin the game with 9 players as long as *rule 4.6* is met. There will be no time limit placed on the 7 regulation innings, which are to be played in their entirety.

1.2 In the event of a tie after regulation innings **the International Tie Breaker Rule will be used. The inning will be started with the last batter as a baserunner on second base and one (1) out.** Ties will be permitted in any case that time does not permit extra innings to be played **except in playoffs.**

1.3 In the event that a game cannot be completed for any reason, five full innings played will constitute a full game; four and a half if the home team is winning.

1.4 A maximum of **five runs** may be scored by a team in any one inning. This limit does not apply to the final regulation inning being played, or to extra innings.

1.5 A two-ball system will be employed, where a smaller diameter ball will be pitched to women, unless she chooses to receive the larger ball. In the event that the wrong ball is pitched to a male batter, the pitch stands, unless the ball is hit, in which case a "dead ball" will be declared. In cases where the wrong ball is pitched to a woman, the play will stand, regardless of whether or not the ball is hit. The umpire will be tasked with making sure the appropriate ball is in play at all time, however it is assumed that the pitcher and catcher will aid in making sure batters are pitched the correct ball.

1.6 **Bats must conform to the approved bat list on the NSA website. If the bat does not have the approved logos on the barrel, it will be deemed illegal and the batter will be called out. A warning will be given to the offending team and if the bat is used again by any player that player will be ejected from the game.**

Reference: <https://nsacanada.ca/bats/>

1.7 Bases and balls will be provided, bats will not.

2. Batting

2.1 A batter may not step on or in front of home plate while making contact with the ball. If this occurs, the player is called out.

2.2 Absolutely no bunting is allowed. An attempt to bunt will result in an out called against the batter.

2.3 A batted ball that hits a batter while still in the "batter's area" is a foul ball. If it's on the third strike the batter is called out.

2.4 **If a male batter is walked with a female batter up next, he will be awarded 2 bases and the female will bat. If a male batter is walked and a male is up next, he will only be awarded 1 base and the male will bat. The next batter must be on deck, if they are not it will only be a 1 base award whether or not it is a male or female batter.**

2.5 No more than 3 men may bat in a row.

2.6 A team that only has 2 women in its batting order will include an automatic out in place of a 3rd woman, in order to fulfill rule 2.5.

2.7 **Double Batting Rule, Opposing teams must have an equal number of women in the batting order for each game. In order to fulfill this requirement, a team fielding less women than their opponent will add extra "batters" to the batting order and, in those spots, bat all women present in an alternating fashion to compensate for the missing women. The extra batting spots must be slotted later in the order than the spots occupied by the women present. If the extra girl needs to be replaced on base it will not count as a courtesy runner.**

2.8 Home Run Rule - "Match plus 2" applicable to all players. Home runs will be valid for a given team only until that team has 2 more home runs than the opposing team. While a team is at "+2" any further home runs by that team will be ruled **an out**. Home runs can once again be counted if the opposing team closes the home

run differential to less than 2. There is no "home run hitter" limit. A walk off after a home run is allowed on all bases.

2.9 Third strike fouls result in an out for men and women, the play is then dead.

3. Base Running

3.1 While on base, no anticipation will be permitted. The batter must make contact with the ball before a runner may leave his/her base.

3.2 A base runner may not step on or over the plate, or slide, when scoring. Any of these will result in the runner being called out. The runner is required to cross the line between the plate and the fence to score.

3.3 Courtesy Runners - Five courtesy runners will be granted to each team per game. Male for male, female for female. The same player may not be used a second time until all capable players of the same sex have run once. If a courtesy runner is used and that runner is still on base when it is his/her turn to bat, another courtesy runner may be used to allow the scheduled batter to bat. If the team has previously exhausted their 5 courtesy runners, an out is recorded for the scheduled batter and the game continues.

4. Fielding

4.1 Teams that have 3 or more women present must field at least 3 every inning. If a team only has 2 women present, it must field both every inning but may field 8 men; in order to field a full roster.

4.2 Outfielders must stay behind the 165 ft. line until contact with the ball is made, this applies to all batters.

4.3 Pitchers must stay completely behind the designated line until the ball is released, that is, both feet must be behind the line at release. This line will be drawn 50 ft. from home plate. If a pitcher violates this rule, it will be deemed an illegal pitch and result in a called ball. If the batter swings at the pitch, the play will continue as if it were legal.

4.4 Infielders must stay behind the base path until contact with the ball is made. Failure to will result in an illegal pitch as above.

4.5 No throw is allowed on any play at first base from any one of the 4 designated outfielders on the batter. In addition, no relays may be made to get the batter out in which the outfielder made the 1st play. Any such attempt by an outfielder will result in a warning and the runner being called safe at first and all base runners advancing one base. The second attempt will result in the runner being given 2nd base and all runners advancing accordingly. Any further attempts may lead to expulsion.

4.6 When more than 2 women are present, no more than 7 men may be on the field at any time. When only 2 women are present, a team may field 8 men.

4.7 The catcher must attempt to make the 1st play at home plate. In the past the pitcher or another infielder may run to home and make the play, this is no longer allowed. If the throw is offline and the catcher goes to retrieve it, another player may now cover home plate and make a play

5. Sitting Rule

5.1 Players who are not playing defensively for an inning are considered "sitting" for that inning. There cannot, at any time, be a difference of more than one inning "sat" between any two players on a team (i.e. no player can "sit" a second time until every other player has "sat" once). An exception arises when rule 4.1 must be adhered to. If a team has only 2 or 3 women present, they will not sit. Rule 5.1 exists to ensure that all players get a relatively equal opportunity to play, and prevents teams from continually "sitting" weaker players.

5.2 A player removed from the field at any time after the start of the inning is not considered to have sat for that inning. Likewise, a player entering the field at any time after the start of the inning is not considered to

have sat for that inning.

5.3 A player who pitches for the entire game is exempt from the sitting requirement. That is, provided the pitcher pitches every inning, he/she is not required to sit. If the pitcher is replaced at any point within the game, for any reason, he/she is subject to the same sitting rules as all players. Violation of this rule will result in a forfeit by the offending team.

6. Substitution/Borrowing

6.1 If a player has to permanently leave a game for any reason, the remainder of his/her at bats will be filled by the most recent same sex out at the time of each at bat. If a situation should arise where there is no available same sex person available to bat (eg. only two women remain and both are on base), an out will be recorded in the departed player's at bat.

6.2 A player arriving late may be added to the batting order, as long as he/she is added after every other member of the same gender and no other rules are broken; coaches are expected to plan ahead for late players. In order to conform to rule 5.1, after the arrival of the late player, no other player may sit for a second time until the late player sits at least once. If every other player has already sat once, the late player must sit the first defensive inning after they join the game (the missed innings do not count as sitting).

6.3 If a player is forced to leave a game, due to injury or an unexpected, personal emergency, and the loss of this player leaves his/her team with fewer than 10 players, or fewer than 2 women, a substitute player may be used in place of the player. Any substitute will be the same gender as the departing player, and must have an equal or lower borrow ranking. If no substitute player is used, then follow rule 6.1 when the missing player is due to bat.

6.4 Teams may borrow as many players as needed from other teams, to field a maximum of 10 players. An exception to the maximum occurs in the case of a team having only 2 women present. In this scenario a team may borrow an additional woman to allow the team to avoid an automatic out in its batting order.

6.5 Teams may not exercise the exception in *rule 6.4* if they have already borrowed a male player. That is, a team may not borrow men to reach 10 players, and then borrow additional females to reach 3 women, or avoid an automatic out.

6.6 A borrowed player must be of the same rank or lower than the person being replaced (except in the case where a player from the lowest grouping may be replaced with one from the next group up), and must be the same gender as the missing player.

6.7 Borrowing is allowed in the regular season and in the playoffs.

6.8 A borrowed player may play any position, including pitcher.

6.9 Borrowed players must bat after all present players of the same sex, that is, no borrowed player may be slotted earlier in the order than any regular same-sex team member. A borrowed player is permitted to bat before a regular team member of the opposite sex.

6.10 A further exception, to rule 6.4, may be made if a team is without any of their designated pitchers. A team, in this circumstance, will be permitted to borrow a designated pitcher from another team as long as all other borrowing rules (i.e. allowed rank, gender, batting order rules, etc.) are followed. The list of designated pitchers will be provided to coaches.

7. Playoffs

7.1 The play-offs will consist of a two division round robin format. The top three teams from each division will advance to the final round, with the two first place teams earning a bye into the semifinal games. Pools are

formed from league standings at the end of the season, with pool A consisting of the 1st, 4th, 5th, and 8th place teams, and pool B consisting of 2nd, 3rd, 6th, and 7th.

7.2 For the first round, the team with the highest ranking will be classified as the home team. Starting in the second round, home and visitor will be determined by a coin toss, called by the higher-ranking team.

7.3 All games will be 7 innings in length. Ties will not be permitted.

7.4 Under no circumstances is the home team to bat in the bottom of the last inning if they are ahead. This applies to regular season and the playoffs.

8. Miscellaneous Rules

8.1 No intentional rough play, fighting, or abusive behavior will be tolerated whatsoever. **Excessive force used by any runner at any base will result in an automatic out and ejection from the game.** Any player found to be in violation of this rule will be ejected from the game and an additional penalty **may** be issued. Umpires will submit a report to the league with recommendations, **THE LEAGUE EXECUTIVES' DECISION ON THE MATTER WILL BE FINAL.**

8.2 Absolutely no alcohol is permitted in the dugouts. Please refrain from the consumption of alcohol near the diamonds. Failure to comply could result in termination of our league permits and season.

8.3 Players found to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be permitted to play.

8.4 Any hanging or loose jewelry must be removed or covered with tape; exemptions will be made for activity monitoring devices (ex. fitbits). Bracelets, rings, necklaces and hoop or hanging earrings are forbidden. Any player coming to bat, wearing non-exempt jewelry will be called out. Please consult with the umpire, prior to the game if clarification is required.

8.5 Jerseys:

8.5.1 No player will be permitted to play without the jersey provided to them by the league. There are no exceptions to this rule. An additional spare jersey has been provided to all coaches and will be available should someone accidentally forget their own, however, there is only one spare. More than one person without a shirt will result in someone not able to participate in the game. Again, there will be no exceptions to this rule. **NO SHIRT, NO PLAY.**

8.5.2 Any situation where a player is removed from the game for not having a jersey after the game begins will be treated in the same manner as outlined in rule 6.1.

8.5.3 Players who lose their jersey will be required to purchase a replacement before being permitted to resume play.

8.5.4 Jerseys may not be altered in any way that obscures or otherwise interferes with any printing on it. Any player doing so will be required to purchase a replacement before being permitted to resume play. Cutting of sleeves is strongly discouraged.

8.6 Your registration form and waiver must be signed and league fees paid in full before you are permitted to play.

8.7 Questioning of umpires with regards to judgment calls such as balls, strikes, safes or outs will not be tolerated. Only coaches are permitted to discuss the interpretation of rules as stated in this document with umpires. Coaches are advised to have a copy of the rules with them at all games.

8.8 DDSPL encourages but does not mandate the use of protective equipment for all players.

Note: DDSPL will follow the official NSA rules unless specifically stated otherwise in this document. If a specific rule or situation is not covered herein, consult the NSA interpretation at <https://nscanada.ca/rules/>