



Columbus Consolidated Government
Columbus Parks & Recreation
Athletic Division
1111 1st Ave
Columbus, Georgia 31901
(706) 225-4506 Office



COLUMBUS PARKS & RECREATION **2024 Spring SOFTBALL RULES**

All players shall follow USA softball rules except for the following:

1. **Player Eligibility**

- A) Men's and Women's Open Divisions – No restrictions; No women are allowed to play on a men's team if there is a women's or coed league available. No Men are allowed to play on women's team.
- B) Coed Divisions – Equal number of men and women in the lineup and playing in the field at all times (5&5 or 6&6). Teams may start with 5 players of one gender and 4 of the other, but the 10th spot in the lineup will be an automatic out.
- C) Must be at least 16 years of age before the season starts.
- D) Players are eligible to play on only one team per league (Men's Open, Coed Open, Women's Open). Any player caught violating this rule will be suspended from Parks and Recreation play for one calendar year.

2. **Waiver/Rosters**

- A) All players must be listed on a Parks & Recreation Official Waiver/Roster Form.
- B) Players will sign waiver/rosters on the first night before their team's first game, they will need a form of Identification.
- C) A protest of player eligibility will result in a forfeit if the team in question fails to have the protested player on the waiver/roster(See Protest Procedure)
- D) Waiver/Roster additions must be done in writing on a Parks & Recreation roster form.
- E) Waiver/Roster additions must be done at the fields the night the player plays in front of an Athletic Staff member. There will be no additions made by phone, email or fax.
- F) Waiver/Roster additions become eligible immediately upon receipt of their names by the athletic staff.
- G) Waiver/Roster additions must be made no later than **the beginning of the teams 8th game!**

3. **Uniforms**

All players shall wear a like colored, numbered jersey. After the second week of season, there will be no exceptions to this rule. No taped or drawn-on numbers will be permitted after the 2-week grace period. Any player not meeting this requirement shall be ineligible to participate in that game.

4. **Dolly Doctrine**

Each player **MUST** have in his/her possession a valid picture ID. This identification must be produced upon request of umpiring staff or Parks & Recreation Athletic Staff (See Rule 5A). Failure to do so in appropriate time will result in a forfeit of the team who does not act in accordance with this rule.

5. **Protest Procedure**

- A) Each team is allowed to protest one player from the other team per game regarding player eligibility. Protest for player eligibility requires an I.D. check of questioned players at the field of play during the game. The Umpire and/or the Parks and Recreation Staff on duty will perform the I.D. check. A \$10.00 fee to the Parks and Recreation Department must accompany all protests concerning player eligibility. Valid protest will result in a return of your protest fee and the team that is playing with an ineligible player will forfeit the game being played.
- B) There is no fee for protest of a misinterpretation of rules. A protest of misinterpretation of rules must be made at the time of the incident in question to the home plate umpire. If the game is not put under protest at the time of the incident, it cannot be put under protest once the game is resumed. The home plate umpire will sign both teams' scorebooks when the game is put under protest.

6. **Game Times**

Men's Open divisions will be played on Monday or Wednesday nights, Coed Open divisions will be played on Tuesday nights. Teams will play doubleheaders one night per week. Games will be 75 minutes in length and will start at 7:30pm or 8:45pm. There will be a 15-minute grace period for the 7:30pm game only, which will be deducted from the game time. If a team has nine players at 7:30pm, they must start the game.

Games may be played at the following locations: South Commons, Alexander, Tillis, or Benning Park.

7. **Scheduling**

Special events or scheduling requests will be taken into consideration provided your team makes these requests on the league application form. Not all requests are guaranteed to be honored.

8. **Rainouts**

- A) Rained out games will be made up at the end of the regular season if necessary.
- B) Rainout of the 7:30 game shall result in all games on that field being canceled.
- C) Any time a civil defense siren sounds, all games shall stop immediately.
- D) Any regular season game stopped prior to the bottom of the 5th inning (except time limit) shall be played again in its entirety. Unless the Home team is batting with the lead in the bottom of the 5th.
- E) Tournament games stopped for any reason (except time limit) shall be started from the point the game was suspended. Using the Official scorebook as reference.
- F) The rainout hotline number is 706-225-4944. You can call this number after 4:00pm to get updates for that night's games.

9. **Forfeits**

Teams forfeiting a total of four games shall be removed from the league without compensation of their fee. The games do not have to be in consecutive order.

10. **Scorekeeping**

The home team is the team listed first on the schedule and is responsible for keeping an accurate scorebook. If the home team does not wish to keep score, the visitor's book will become official. The official scorekeeper is responsible for obtaining both umpires' signatures in the event of a protest or rainout. During tournament games, the home team will be decided by a coin flip by the umpire.

11. **Wynnton Wisdom**

- A) If a team starts with 9 players and the tenth player never shows, there is no penalty for the open slot in the lineup (except in coed, see Rule 11-F).
- B) If a team starts with 9 players, the tardy tenth participant will always bat tenth in the lineup.
- C) If a team starts with 10 players, loses one player and is unable to substitute, that slot in the batting order results in an automatic out.
- D) If a team starts with 11 or 12 players, loses one player and is unable to substitute, that slot in the batting order results in an automatic out.
- E) If a team starts with 11 or 12 players, loses two players and is unable to substitute, both slots in the batting order result in automatic outs.
- F) (Co-Ed Slow Pitch Only) A game may begin or finish with 9 players, with the vacant position being an automatic out in the batting order; but, when, and if, another player arrives (of correct gender missing), that player must be inserted into the line-up at the tenth batting position (depending on vacant spot by alternating genders). If a team plays short-handed with either three in the infield or outfield, at least one of the three must be a female player.
- G) If a team loses a player and cant substitute for causing the team to fall 8 players the game will result in a forfeit for that team.

12. **Batter's Count**

All at-bats will start with a count of one (1) ball and one (1) strike, and you will receive one courtesy foul with two strikes. Another foul ball after the courtesy foul has been used will result in an out.

13. **Homerun Rule**

The Homerun Rule for over-the-fence homeruns in all Men's Open will be "4 and 1UP". Once a team hits 4 homeruns, that team is not allowed to hit another homerun until the opposing team has hit 4 homeruns. Once both teams have hit 4 homeruns, either team is able to hit the next homerun, but you are not allowed to have hit more than 1 homerun than the other team at any time from this point forward. If both teams have hit the same amount of homeruns, either team is eligible to hit a homerun. Homeruns that are hit when your team is not eligible will result in an out.

The Homerun Rule for over-the-fence homeruns in all Coed divisions will be "2 and 1UP". Once men hit 2 homeruns (**Women can hit unlimited homeruns**), that team is not allowed to hit another homerun until the opposing team has hit 2 homeruns. Once both teams have hit 2 homeruns, either team is able to hit the next homerun, but you are not allowed to have hit more than 1 homerun than the other team at any time from this point forward. If both teams have hit the same amount of homeruns, either team is eligible to hit a homerun. Homeruns that are hit when your team is not eligible will result in an out.

Neither the batter nor runner is required to touch the next base on an over-the-fence homerun. Any ball touched by a defensive player, which then goes over the fence in fair territory shall not be included in the total of over-the-fence homeruns.

14. **Stealing**

- A) Runners must remain at the bag until contact is made between the bat and ball or until the ball crosses home plate. In the men's divisions, if there are two umpires, stealing will be allowed; if there is one umpire, there will be no stealing.
- B) There is no stealing in Coed or Women's divisions.

15. **Run Rule**

Run rule shall be twenty (20) after four (4) innings and fifteen (15) after five (5) innings.

16. **Courtesy Runner**

In Men's and Women's Open divisions, each team may use one courtesy runner per inning, no matter what position the batter is playing. In Coed divisions, you may use one courtesy runner for each gender per inning. Any eligible player on the official lineup including available substitutes may be used as a courtesy runner. A courtesy runner whose turn at bat comes up while on base will be called out and removed from the base to take their turn at bat. No additional courtesy runners are allowed.

17. **The Second Baptist Stature**

The Columbus Parks & Recreation Department does not acknowledge tie games. Should a tie game occur due to rain or mechanical failure, it shall be played to completion at the point of suspension.

18. **Pitcher Protection Box**

There will be a lined box 6ft behind the pitchers mound, which the designated pitcher will pitch from to provide additional reaction time in case of line drives. This box will be treated as a floating rubber. One foot must remain in box when pitch is released. A screen will be provided during league nights but the screen must be in contact with the pitching rubber at all times.

19. **Equipment**

A) Columbus parks and recreation will provide league bats.

Softball bats must be certification stamp approved and have one of the following certification stamps on the bat: ASA 2004, USA Softball, or USSSA Thumbprint. The official bat shall not be an Altered Bat. The weight, distribution of weight, and length of the bat as well as all other characteristics of the bat must be permanently fixed by the manufacturer and may not be altered in any way thereafter. Inserting material inside the bat, applying excessive tape (more than two layers) to the bat or painting the bat are examples of altering a bat.

- 1) Umpires or Parks and Recreation staff may, at their discretion, remove equipment from play that has been altered, is not without one of the approved stamps listed above, or is otherwise deemed illegal.
- 2) Those players found to be using altered or illegal equipment shall be subject to disqualification for fraud in accordance with Article 505 of the USA Code.
- 3) The MINIMUM penalty for disqualified players shall be a one year loss of eligibility.

B) **All teams are required to furnish a new ball per game that is purchased from Columbus Parks and Recreation. The balls used to start all league games must meet the following criteria:**

- 1) **Women's 11" - USA Stamp and Columbus Parks and Recreation Stamp must be readable**
- 2) **Men's 12" - USA Stamp and Columbus Parks and Recreation Stamp must be readable**

Each team will mark the balls that they furnish in a distinctive manner so that the umpire can easily keep the balls separate. Each team will hit the balls that they furnish. Should a ball become lost or unplayable, it is the responsibility of the offensive team to replace that ball with a playable ball. Playable balls are those that the Compression, COR., Columbus Parks and Recreation Stamp and the USA logo can be read by the umpire and based solely on umpire discretion. The following batter may start receiving strikes if a playable ball has not been put into play in a reasonable amount of time. The defensive team may put a ball into play at any time to save time while offense is retrieving balls. Balls are not to be heated or cooled in any way as this is deemed to be altering equipment. A team that is found to have altered balls will forfeit their current game.

C) Georgia Ball Replacement Rule

During all local league play, a team, while on offense with no count on the batter, may at its discretion place into the game a ball of the same type as specified by league rules. Such balls remain game balls and should be returned to the appropriate team at game's end. The Homeplate umpire must inspect any ball put into play.

D) Metal cleats are not allowed in Columbus Parks and Recreation Leagues

20. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Players ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct must leave the area entirely. This means completely out of sight and earshot. Failure to do so shall result in a forfeit of the game. Any player or coach ejected from a game will serve a minimum one game suspension for their team's next game. Any player involved in any form of physical violence at a minimum will be suspended for the remainder of the season. All players serving a suspension are not allowed in the complex during league play until the suspension is served. Any suspended player caught in the complex, playing or not, may cause his or her team to forfeit the game being played or the player may receive an additional suspension.

21. Tournament

The format for the Postseason Tournament will have an upper and lower bracket for all leagues. The brackets will be decided by standings.

22. Covid- 19 rule

All Players are encouraged to practice social distancing and good hygiene while at the complex. After the games, players must "tip" the hats to the other players instead of high-fives. No after game meetings on the field.

23. Any problem or situation not covered by USA Softball or the rules listed above will be dealt with by the Parks and Recreation staff during normal business hours.

WAGGONERS TRUCKING TIE BREAKING PROCEDURE

The problem: Two teams in the same division have identical records. Both teams have recorded 17 wins and 3 losses. We got to have a tiebreaker!!

First tiebreaker is head-to-head results from the regular season. If Team "X" sweeps or wins 2 out of 3 from team "Y", team "X" would be declared the higher place.

Second tiebreaker is best aggregate record of teams that beat your team. Here's an example of what Could happen.

Third tiebreaker shall be a flip of the coin by the Athletic Staff.

Men's Open Division I

<u>Team</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>
Cubs	17	3
Giants	17	3
Yankees	16	4
Braves	15	5
Cards	10	10
Orioles	7	13
Dodgers	6	14

The Cubs and the Giants split 1-1 in the regular season.

The Cubs lose to Giants	(17-3)
The Cubs lose to Yankees	(16-4)
The Cubs lose to Braves	(15-5)
Aggregate Record	48 - 12 (.800)

The Giants lose to Cubs	(17-3)
The Giants lose to Cards	(10-10)
The Giants lose to Dodgers	(6-14)
Aggregate Record	33 - 27 (.550)

CUBS WIN!

If teams are still tied after looking at the aggregate record the next tie breaker is Head-to-Head Run Differential between the tied teams.

The Cubs and the Giants split 1-1 in the regular season and didn't lose to any other teams. The Cubs beat the Giants 14-7, and the Giants beat the Cubs 16-15. The Cubs Run Differential is 7 points while the Giants is 1 which means the CUBS WIN!!

If the teams are still tied after Head-to-Head Run Differential, the next tie breaker is Run Differential against common opponents for the season. If still tied, then a coin flip will determine the Champion.